THE
LOVE
LETTERS
OF
PRINCE
BISMARCK

Isla Blackwood

Rosehill House

1906

THE LOVE-LETTERS OF PRINCE BISMARCK

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FÜRSTIN VON BISMARCK
(*After Franz von Lenbach*)

THE LOVE-LETTERS OF PRINCE BISMARCK

EDITED BY

PRINCE HERBERT BISMARCK

With Portraits

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. II

LONDON
WILLIAM HEINEMANN
1901

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FRANKFORT, *June* 26, '51.

MY DARLING,—I have been suffering all day long from homesickness. I received your letter of Sunday early, and then I sat in the window and smelled the summer fragrance of roses and all sorts of shrubs in the little garden, and while so doing I heard one of your dear Beethoven pieces, played by an unknown hand on the piano, wafted over from some window opposite, distantly and in snatches, and to me it seemed better than any concert. I kept wondering why I have to be so far away, for long intervals, from you and the children, while so many people who do not love each other at all are together from morning till night. It is now seven months since I received my marching orders at Reinfeld; since then we have twice paid each other a hasty visit, and it will be eight or nine months before we shall be united again. It must, indeed, be the Lord's will, for I did not seek it, and when I am sorrowful it is a consolation to me that I did not say a syllable in order to come here, and that ambition of outward pomp was not what led me to this separation. We are not in this world to be happy and to enjoy, but to do our duty; and the less my condition is a self-made one, the more do I realise that I must perform the duties of the office in which I am placed. And I will not be ungrateful, for, in spite of all, I am happy in the knowledge that I possess so much that is dear, even if far away from me, and in the hope of a happy reunion. My first feeling on the arrival of every letter from Reinfeld is one of hearty gratitude for my unmerited happiness in that I still have you in this world, and with every death of wife or child which I see in the newspaper the consciousness of what I have to lose and of what

the merciful God has granted and thus far preserved to me, comes forcibly home to me. May gratitude therefor so dispose my obstinate and worldly heart to receive the mercy of the Lord that it shall not be necessary for Him to chastise me in what I love, for I have greater fear of that than of any other evil. . . . In a few weeks it must be decided whether I shall be made Envoy here or stay at Reinfeld. The Austrians at Berlin are agitating against my appointment, because my black-and-white is not sufficiently yellow for them; but I hardly believe they will succeed, and you, my poor dear, will probably have to jump into the cold water of diplomacy; and the boy, unlucky wight that he is, will have a South-German accent added to his birth at Berlin. . . . How I should like to turn suddenly around the bushy corner of the lawn and surprise all of you in the drawing-room! I see you so plainly, attending to the children, covering up Miechen with sensible speeches, and father sitting at his desk smoking, the mayor beside him, and mother bolt upright on her sofa, by a wretched light, one hand lying on the arm of the chair, or holding the *Musée Français* close before her eyes. God grant that at this moment everything at Reinfeld is going as smoothly as this. I have at last received a letter from Hans, a very charming one, and, contrary to his custom, mysterious, in view of the post-office spies. You may imagine how Senfft writes to me under these circumstances. I received an unsigned letter from him the other day, from which the most quick-witted letter-bandit would have been at a loss to decipher what he was driving at. If you occasionally come across some unintelligible notices at the tail end of the *Zuschauer*, they will thus seem to you more puzzling still, and to the blockhead who breaks open this letter they will remain unintelligible, even if I tell you that they are a part of my correspondence. Only give me frequent tidings, my beloved heart, even if short ones, so that I may have the assurance that you are alive and well. I have picked the enclosed leaves for you in the garden of old Amschel

Rothschild, whom I like, because he is simply a haggling Jew, and does not pretend to be anything else, and, at the same time, a strictly orthodox Jew, who touches nothing at his big dinners, and only eats Kosher food. "Johann, take some bread for the deer," he said to his servant as he came out to show me his garden, in which there are some tame fallow deer. "Baron, that plant cost me two thousand guilders, honour bright, two thousand guilders cash; I will let you have it for one thousand, or, if you want it for nothing, he shall bring it to your house. God knows I appreciate you highly, Baron; you are a fine man, a worthy man." He is a little, thin, grey imp of a man, the patriarch of his tribe, but a poor man in his palace, childless, a widower, cheated by his servants, and ill-treated by aristocratic Frenchified and Anglicised nephews and nieces, who will inherit his treasures without gratitude and without love. Good-night, my angel. The clock is striking twelve; I want to go to bed and read chap. ii. of the Second Epistle of St. Peter. I am now doing that in a systematic way, and when I have finished St. Peter, at your recommendation I shall read the Hebrews, which I do not know at all as yet. May God's protection and blessing be with you all.

Your most faithful

V. B.

FRANKFORT, *July* 3, 1851.

MY PET,—I very thankfully received your letter and the tidings that you are all well the day before yesterday. But do not forget when you write to me that your letters are opened not by me alone, but by all sorts of postal spies, and don't abuse particular persons so much in them, for all is immediately reported and debited to my account; besides, you do people injustice. Concerning my appointment or non-appointment I know nothing as yet,

except what was told me when I left; all else, mere possibilities and surmises. The only odd thing about the matter thus far has been the government's silence towards me, for it would have been only fair to let me know by this time, officially, whether during next month I am to live here, or in Pomerania with my wife and children. Be very careful in your remarks to every one, without exception, not to Massow alone; particularly in your criticisms of individuals, for you have no idea what one experiences in this respect after once becoming an object of surveillance; be prepared to see warmed up with sauce, here or at Sans Souci, what you may perhaps whisper to Charlotte * or Annchen in the shrubberies or the bath-house. Forgive me for being so admonitory, but after your last letter I must take the diplomatic pruning-knife in hand a bit. Do not write me anything that the police may not read and communicate to King, Ministers, or Rochow. If the Austrians and many other folks can succeed in sowing distrust in our camp, they will thereby attain one of the principal objects of their letter-pilfering. The day before yesterday I dined at Wiesbaden, with Dewitz, and with a mixture of sadness and of mature wisdom, I reviewed the scenes of past follies. Would that it might please God to fill with His clear and strong wine this vessel, in which at that time the champagne of youth foamed so uselessly, leaving stale dregs behind. Where and how are Isabella Lorraine and Miss Russell living now? How many of those with whom I then flirted, tippled, and diced, are now dead and buried! How many transformations has my view of the world undergone in the fourteen years which have since elapsed, though I always considered the existing one infallible! and how much now seems small to me which then appeared great, how much deserving of respect which I then ridiculed! How many a green bud within us may still unfold, grow to leafy verdure, and wither worthlessly away before another fourteen years are over, before 1865, if we are still alive! I cannot imagine how a thoughtful person who, nevertheless, knows

* Frau von Zanthier, *née* von Puttkamer.

nothing or wishes to know nothing of God, can endure the despicable tedium of life, a life which is fleeting as a stream, as a sleep, even as a blade of grass that soon withers; we end our years like an aimless talk. I do not know how I endured it in the past; if I should live now as I did then, without God, without you, without the children, I should, in fact, be at a loss to know why I should not cast off this life like a soiled shirt; and yet, most of my acquaintances are thus, and they live. When, in the case of any particular individual I ask myself what reason he can have, in his own mind, for continuing to live, to toil, to fret, to intrigue, and to spy—verily I do not know. Do not conclude from this scribbling that I happen to be in a particularly black mood; on the contrary, I feel as when, on a beautiful September day, one contemplates the yellowing foliage; I am healthy and gay, but feel a little sadness, a little homesickness, a longing for woods, lake, meadow, you and the children, all mingled with the sunset and a Beethoven symphony. Instead of these joys, I now have to call upon tiresome Serene Highnesses and read endless figures about German sloops of war and cannon-yawls, which are rotting at Bremerhaven and devouring cash. I should like to have a horse, but I should not care to ride strange horses alone; that would be stupid work, and the company I could have here is equally stupid. And now I must go to see Rochow and all sorts of "ins" and "offs" in attendance on the Grand Duchess Olga. . . . Farewell, my beloved heart. Much love to our parents, and God keep you all.

Your most faithful

v. B.

FRANKFORT, *July* 8, 1851.

MY DARLING,—Both yesterday and to-day I wished very much to write to you, but owing to a hurly-burly of business I have not been able to do so till now, late

in the evening after returning from a walk during which, in the air of a charming summer night, moonlight, and the rustling of poplar-leaves, I have brushed off the dust of the day's documents. On Saturday afternoon, I went with Rochow and Lynar to Rüdesheim, hired a boat there, rowed out on the Rhine, and swam in the moonlight, nothing but nose and eyes above the tepid water, as far as the Mouse Tower near Bingen, where the wicked Bishop met his death. There is something strangely dreamlike in thus lying in the water on a warm quiet night, carried gently along by the tide, seeing only the sky with moon and stars, and, alongside, the wooded hill-tops and the castle battlements in the moonlight, hearing nothing but the gentle splash of one's own motion. I should like to swim thus every evening. Then I had some very good wine, and sat for a long time smoking with Lynar on the balcony, the Rhine beneath us. My little Testament and the starry sky caused our conversation to turn on Christian topics, and I hammered for a long time at the Rousseauesque virtue of his soul, with no result save that I reduced him to silence at last. He was ill-treated when a child by nurses and private tutors, and never really learned to know his parents. His upbringing, so similar to my own, caused him to grow up with youthful opinions akin to mine, but he is far more satisfied with these than I ever was. Next morning we went by steamer to Coblentz, breakfasted there, and returned by the same route to Frankfort, where we arrived in the evening. I really undertook the expedition to visit old Metternich at Johannisberg; he had invited me, but the Rhine pleased me so much that I preferred to drive to Coblentz, and postponed the call. You remember we saw the place immediately after the Alps, and in very bad weather. On this summer morning, after the dusty tedium of Frankfort, it again rose high in my esteem. I promise myself much pleasure from a few days with you at Rüdesheim, the place is so quiet and rural, the people kindly, and the prices low; we will hire a little row-boat, and go leisurely down, climb the Niederwald,

visit the castles, and return by the steamer. One can leave here early in the morning, stay eight hours at Rüdesheim, Bingen, Rheinstein, &c., and be back again by night. My appointment here does not appear to be certain, and Hans is going to Coblentz as Chief President; he will live there in a stately palace, with the finest view in all Prussia. By leaving here early, one can get to Coblentz by half-past ten, and be back in the evening; it is an easier journey than from Reinfeld to Reddentin, and a prettier road. You see we are not forsaken here; but who would have thought, when we were at the wedding in Kiekow, that we should both be removed from our innocent Pomeranian solitude and landed on the high places of life, speaking in worldly fashion, and in political outposts on the Rhine? The ways of the Lord are passing strange. May He likewise lift our souls out of their darkness to the bright summits of His grace. *That* position would be more secure. But He has certainly taken us visibly into His hand and He will not let me fall, even though I sometimes make myself a heavy weight. My talk with Lynar the other day has truly enabled me to cast a grateful (but not pharisaical) glance over the distance which lies between me and my previous unbelief; may it increase continually, until it has attained the proper measure. . . . I am already beginning to look about here for a house, preferably outside the city, with a garden; there my darling will have to play a very stiff, self-contained part, see much tedious society, give dinners and balls, and assume terribly aristocratic airs. What do you say to folks dancing at your house until far into the night? You will have to put up with it, my beloved heart—it is part of the "service." I can see mother's blue eyes grow big with wonder at the thought. I am going to bed, to read Corinthians i. 3, and pray God to preserve you all to me, and grant you a quiet night and health and peace. Dearest love to your parents.

Your most faithful

v. B.

LIEBENSTEIN, *July* 26, 1851.

MY DARLING,—From the little letter I wrote you from Berlin you know how it is that I happen to be here; I arrived the night before last in such a terrific thunderstorm that I hardly survived the four miles from Eisenach up into these mountains, as the lightning was my only torch; it was so pitch dark that in the open carriage I could not see the driver on the box. I found Albert tolerably clear in his mind again, but in the mental condition of a child of three. . . . I do not believe that he will leave Liebenstein alive; the symptoms are those of approaching death; but God's help is mighty, and aunt is calm and quiet, untiring in her nursing by day and night. Yesterday he was somewhat more lively, but worse again this morning, so that at aunt's entreaty I countermanded the order for my carriage, as to-morrow is Sunday; but I cannot stay longer than to-morrow morning. The doctors say that, with his sound constitution, he may possibly recover, but that it is not likely, and they are already treating him more as if they were anxious to make his last days easier than as if they had any hope of prolonging his life. I am very glad that I came here; I was able to be of assistance to them mentally as well as physically, or rather medically. May God, by His grace, help aunt to maintain the strength and calm she now has. This is a miserable hole; nothing to be had—no beds, no furniture, no human help. For the past week they have kept ice poultices on his head. It is pitiful to see. . . .

Late at Night.

Albert is getting along better since noon; he talks more sensibly and moves his limbs. Still I cannot indulge in hope as yet; he is too low. Farewell, my beloved angel. I will write from Frankfort the day after to-morrow.

Your most faithful

V. B.

FRANKFORT, *July* 29, '51.

MY BELOVED HEART,—I am very unhappy because I have not yet had a letter from you, and am tortured by anxieties on that account. You have doubtless received mine from Berlin and Liebenstein? When I left, Albert had been much better for several hours; his mind was clearer, and he had an idea of his situation, and a sense of gratitude for the nursing; it was touching to see his modesty and contentment; his behaviour was just like that of an obedient child. But still the doctors had no confidence that he would recover. God strengthen the poor aunt. It seemed to me at parting that I was leaving the last piece of Pomerania behind me, and coming back to school here. . . . Since seeing the tiresome people here again it seems to me quite unnecessary that you should be so afraid of appearing among them; they are not at all worth such terrors. I am quite sick with longing for you and the children; I feel here as I did in the solitude of Kniephof on returning there after a long absence; and the papers which have accumulated lie so thickly about me; every one is storming in on me with matters that are in a hurry, and it all vexes me. . . . Do write to me very often; it is my only ray of light here when I see a letter from you, which forms the long, thin thread of communication between my love and me; otherwise I live here simply like a machine. If you could realise my condition here, you would overwhelm me with letters. God's blessing be with you, my heart, and bring me glad tidings from you quickly. My love to Annchen and your parents from

Your most faithful

V. B.

FRANKFORT, *August* 5, '51.

MY SWEETHEART,—The day before yesterday I had to pay Hans a visit at Coblentz, on business; before leaving I went to the post-office to see whether a letter had come from you overnight, but in vain; sad and anxious, I took my departure. Yesterday, on the way back, I wanted to see Metternich on the Johannisberg, but when it was a question of getting out at Bingen, the impulse to come here, where I now confidently hoped to find tidings, was too strong; I remained on the boat, passed by the Johannisberg, came here by rail, and entered my room expectantly; there were letters enough, but none from you. However there was one from father, written at Liebenstein, which gave me the semi-assurance that up to the 27th you had all been well. But I am very sorry that father is not coming here from Liebenstein; it is a short day's journey; he writes that he is starting on the 5th, *i.e.* to-day, on his return from L., so that I, or a letter from me, would not find him there, even with the utmost expedition. Moritz, too, has written me a short letter, in which he confirms what he foresaw when I passed through Plathe, and confided to me under the pledge of secrecy; you will probably read it in the papers before this letter arrives—Hedwig's betrothal to Wangemann. If it has not yet been made public, then say nothing about it. I shall wait here until to-morrow morning for a letter from you, then I must go to Johannisberg, to Prince M., who has already invited me for the third time without my having been to him. I have now been away from you for seventeen days, and not a syllable of news as yet; my consequent anxiety does not leave me for a moment, and unfits me for all occupations. I shall have to endeavour to become more indifferent in my solicitude as to the welfare of my family, for otherwise, if such

intervals in our correspondence occur again, I shall be unfit to perform the duties of my office here. This is the fifth letter I have written you since my departure, and I also sent one to mother last week, begging her to inform me as to your health. Father holds out little hope regarding Albert; you will doubtless have word from him direct. May the Lord have you and the children in His keeping, and soon put to an end to my uncertainty, which makes me physically and mentally ill.

Your most faithful

v. B.

FRANKFORT, *August* 11, '51.

MY DARLING,—The salutary shower of letters which I am enjoying, after a long period of drought, has refreshed my soul and brought about a change of mood of which I was much in need. For when the seventeenth, eighteenth, nineteenth day passed with no sign from your generally active pen, I exhausted myself in adventurous surmises; now I was angry, and bethought myself how I would scold you; now anxiety got the upper hand; I went sadly to bed, and awoke with that sort of fright which generally, in unpleasant situations, accompanies the first return to consciousness. Now all is well again, and I will not scold further, but rejoice that you and the children are well, and that you are having good weather for bathing. Some of my ejaculations will have reached you in the meantime; I wrote last to father at Stolpe, the day before I received your first letter. Meanwhile I have been with Hans; he is housed charmingly, in a mansion which is larger than the Bellevue Palace at Berlin, with a terrace and verandah just over the Rhine, facing Ehrenbreitstein. Our new Aunt Charlotte is very amiable, and pretty, too, save for her

mouth; she seems to me almost too serious; they both appear to be very fond of each other, as is natural; she is orientally obedient, and he is all official zeal, which, in a way, seems rather forced; once he is sitting among his papers he no longer knows a mortal soul. Wednesday and Thursday I spent with old Metternich; he was very kind and cordial, conversed uninterruptedly about 1788 to 1848, about politics and vineyards, about literature and forestry, and combated my doleful abstraction, which was brooding over the reasons for your silence, with his best Johannisberger. I had a room overlooking the Rhine and the hills; it was a splendid, warm, moonlight night, and I lay for a long time in the window, thinking sorrowfully of Vevay, of the Lake of Traun, and of the cold October day when we both travelled down the Rhine, and of how green overcoats may guard against outward cold, while against inward frost there is no protection but austere endurance and abnegation. I dreamed I was in Schönhausen, where childhood and the present were unpleasantly interwoven, and when I awoke I found it difficult to bring my thoughts back to Johannisberg. Early in the morning, pending the arrival of my boat, I took a drive to the Niederwald; when you come you shall see how charming it is. It is something like the Rosstreppe, only with the Rhine instead of the Bode river below. . . . The Prince of Prussia was here yesterday. I accompanied him from Darmstadt, and found that he is now very well disposed towards me, of which I am very glad, for, apart from all externals, he is a noble-minded soul. He did not touch on the matter of Hans's appointment, and neither did I. I can easily imagine that Hedwig's engagement must agitate you greatly. Moritz spoke to me about it at Plathe, as of a thing inevitable, unless Wangemann altered his mind on his return to Switzerland. I shall be glad if Hedwig's shrivelled life-plant buds again; after the joyless life she has led lately, I do not begrudge her the happiness she seeks; whether she will find it, we are not competent to judge. That Moritz must marry is certain, and in all

probability his sister will not leave him before this. Could we not make a match between him and Therese? But I am ashamed to be mentally weaving her a bridal-wreath while she is, perhaps, standing beside Albert's death-bed. . . . With affectionate love,

Your most faithful

v. B.

Who told you the yarn about Petersburg? I have no idea of such a thing!

FRANKFORT, *August* 13, '51.

MY DARLING,—A thousand thanks for your diligence in writing. I received your letter of the 9th this morning . . . and suffered all the tortures of toothache with you. But *don't* have any more taken out; it is no good, and they will only torment you in vain, like the ass at Schönhausen. I have been very busy to-day in connection with the King's journey and countless small affairs with the petty courts, and now I am expecting a tiresome ambassadorial visit every moment, so that this letter will be very short, though you must look upon it as a little love-token. Who told you all that nonsense about St. Petersburg? I have not heard a word about it save in your letter. Wouldn't you like to go to Nicholas? I should not at all mind a winter there; but I have had enough of partings, and perhaps the climate would not suit you and the babies. . . . Yesterday I went for a long, lonely walk in the mountains, till very late in the splendid moonlight night. I had been working from eight till five; then I dined, and rioted in the fresh evening air of the Taunus, after leaving this dusty hole some two miles behind me by means of a railway journey of half-an-hour to Soden. It is very hot again to-day, but I am

cool enough, in my shirt, linen drawers, and slippers, the windows open, and the jalousies closed. The King is to pass through here on the 19th, and returns to Berlin on September 7, *viâ* Ischl and Prague. I expect I shall go to meet him at Coblentz, as I have a great deal to discuss with Fra Diavolo. If he brings me my nomination, as I presume he will, I will take a house at once, and we can then arrange about your journey. There is a ring! . . .

Your most faithful

v. B.

FRANKFORT, *August* 16, '51.

It is already late, my darling, but after writing all day in his Majesty's service, and receiving calls, then partaking of an interminably long and solemn dinner with the reigning Burgomaster, taking a digestive walk, and working again for a few hours, I must still have a little chat with my dearest, particularly as I shall probably not have time to write during the next few days. I am a real heathen, for I do not get to church any more, and I always travel on Sundays—arriving here on that day four weeks ago from Reinfeld, and three weeks ago from Liebenstein; two weeks ago I went to Hans, last week to Darmstadt to fetch the Prince of Prussia, and to-morrow I go to Coblentz to meet the King. I have a very guilty conscience about it; for I serve men on the day when I should serve only God, and always have the stupid excuse that it's useful or necessary to do so. The King will stay at Mayence the day after to-morrow, and will pass through here on Tuesday. To-morrow evening he arrives at Stolzenfels. I have now really received my appointment as envoy to the Diet, and in a few days I shall be initiated, and Rochow will take his departure. They have cut off three thousand Reichsthaler from the salary; and they do not seem

disposed to give me an allowance for installation expenses. The latter fact is most unpleasant to me, for the initial establishment will cost several thousand thalers at least. It is possible, however, to live well and elegantly with eighteen thousand, which is fifty Reichsthaler a day, but I feel uncomfortable at having no criterion or estimate of this new sort of existence, to enable me to arrange accordingly as to lodgings and furnishing. As soon as I am at leisure I shall write to Fritz about a second valet, and a maid for you; I shall probably not engage any other servants just now, as I can hardly procure horses and a carriage before the spring, and meanwhile I shall manage with a hired carriage. Your coming here will now depend, after your own wishes and requirements, on whether I find a house; there is not a large variety to choose from, because I want a garden by all means, and there are not many spacious dwellings available. I have gratefully received a long, kind letter from father, and have gladly given thanks to God that you are all well, with the exception of your teeth, my poor little creature; God grant that these disturbances, which are undoubtedly caused by your sea-bathing, may prove to be omens that you will return from the sea quite well. Hearty love to mother, and many thanks, too, for her kind letters. I am too much driven just now to be able to answer her. I can hardly go out walking as much as I ought to do in order to avoid headaches. Generally I go out in the evening, these grand, warm, moonlight nights, before going to bed. This I am going to do now, as I am getting sleepy, and must rise early to-morrow. Fare very well, my sweetheart. May God's blessing and protection be with you and all the loved ones.

Your most faithful

v. B.

FRANKFORT, *August* 23, '51.

MY DARLING,—Post time has come while I am still in the midst of business, and I will write to you hurriedly rather than not at all. I have been continually on the move since Monday. First of all, we had a great gala dinner here for the Emperor of Austria, at which certainly twenty thousand Reichsthalers' worth of gold-encumbered uniforms sat at table; then I went to Mayence to receive the King; he was quite gracious, joking with me harmlessly and gaily again for the first time. A grand supper, then work with Manteuffel until nearly two, then a cigar with dear old Stolberg, up again at half-past five, review, then by rail here, the King taking me into his *coupé;* a grand presentation here; I then went along to Darmstadt; dinner there, after which the King went to Baden, I returning here again in the evening, after three weary hours with the Minister at Baden. On Wednesday, while still in bed, I was summoned to the Duke of Nassau at Biberich; dined there; the Duchess asked me to come again often without invitation, particularly with *you*, my heart, when you should be here. I returned late in the evening, to be awakened early next morning by President Gerlach and Jacob, who seized me and bore me off to Heidelberg, where I stayed the night, spending some charming hours with him at the Wolfsbrunn Castle and at Neckarsteinach; I only returned from this carouse last night. G. was more charming than ever; did not dispute at all; was enthusiastic, poetical, and devoted; but she was impervious to all this, though otherwise amiable. The day before yesterday, at the castle, we saw a sunset like ours on the Rigi; yesterday we breakfasted on the summit, went on foot to Wolfsbrunn, where I drank beer at the same table as before with you; then we went up the

Neckar to Steinach, and separated at Heidelberg in the evening. To-day G. goes to Coblentz, Jacob to Italy. It was very pleasant; may you, too, have been having a good time while I was so gay; do write oftener than hitherto; in the last nine days I have again had only one letter, but a very dear one. I have not had time in the midst of all these doings to think seriously about poor Albert. Alexander wrote to me of his death. May the Lord graciously and mercifully receive his peaceful spirit, and grant continued firmness of faith to the dear aunt, that she may not suddenly collapse, now that all is over and quiet is restored; hitherto she has been heroic. How will things go on at Reddentin? Surely she will still live there. This can be arranged with Uncle Henry, and it will be more agreeable to her. God keep you.

Your most faithful

v. B.

FRANKFORT, *August* 28, '51.

MY BELOVED ANGEL,—I am beginning this letter with a very cramped wrist, for my pen has not been at rest since eight o'clock, and the letters are swimming before my eyes. Yesterday I was introduced in the Diet; Rochow left the day before, and the matter is now settled. . . . This metamorphosis will be a difficult piece of work for both of us, my darling, but I am glad that I see at last some prospect of being reunited with you and the children in a lasting home-life. The thought of your poor dear parents in their solitude lies heavily on my heart; would to God that things had so shaped themselves that we might have continued to live together, or, at least, not have drifted *so* far apart. We are not in this life, however, for the sake of comfort, but we owe ourselves and our energies to the service of God, the King, and the country. Do write to

me at once about our poor dear Reddentins; ever since I was at Liebenstein I have had no hope for Albert, and the news was not unexpected. My continued occupations seldom give me leisure for reflection and sadness, but when I think of you and the children I can realise what it means to lose one's only grown-up son, after having possessed him for thirty years. May the Lord's mercy protect us from such tribulation. I do not believe I am sufficiently resigned to bear it in such a Christian spirit as dear aunt does. The arrangements for your removal and the children's, and the selection of what we need here from Schönhausen and what we shall have to purchase, I find almost more difficult than the Diet affairs. . . . Write me the result of the discussions between your wisdom and that of your parents in the matter of the journey, and, at any rate, write to me soon and much and often; I have so very little time from morning to night, you must write much oftener than I. Many greetings to your parents. Farewell, my beloved heart. The Lord's goodness be your shield.

Your most faithful

v. B.

FRANKFORT, *August* 30, '51.

TO FRAU VON BISMARCK, *Reinfeld, near Zuckers:*

Your letter of Monday-Tuesday, my dear, which I have just received, has so alarmed me that I can think of nothing but whether our Miechen is still living to-day or not; according to your letter you have, in the natural course of things, but little hope. God, the Lord of life and death, can help her, perhaps has helped her, but at this distance it is terrible to have only tidings which are five days old, and not to know how things are going to-day. I confidently hope to hear from you again to-morrow, and pray God the

news may be better than to-day's. Do write to me oftener, in any case, my angel; again this letter now lying before me is the first sign of life I have had from you for over a week, and I was already beginning to be sorrowful that you think of me so seldom. Business matters here have no regard for my feelings, and while my heart is filled with anxiety on the child's account, I am obliged to listen to and discuss the greatest variety of matters, attend three different committee-meetings, carefully weigh my words, and negotiate a dozen different things, which, in my anxiety and uncertainty, I find it very hard to do. If you wish to send me news in haste, write to the *Neue Preussische Zeitung*, with the direction, "To be forwarded at once by express," asking that the communication be telegraphed to me; particularly if you have occasion to send good news after bad, make haste to free me from anxiety. I hope that our separation will last but a few weeks more, and perhaps by God's grace this manner of giving me your bulletins will not be necessary. May the Lord's mercy preserve us from misfortune, and not punish us, and me particularly, in our children for our transgressions.

Your most faithful

v. B.

I have just turned at random to a Psalm, to comfort myself, and happened on the 112th, which is very beautiful.

FRANKFORT, *September* 6, '51.

As from the Chamber, my love, I now write to you while at a session of the Diet; which is somewhat more difficult, as little speaking is done here, but at every stroke important resolutions are taken, so that one must be very attentive when motions are read aloud. Only two words therefore.

For a week I have been overburdened, just as in the Chamber—hardly a moment of leisure, hardly an hour for taking a walk at night. I have taken a villa a little way beyond the gates, with a pretty garden, full of flowers. You will like it. . . . God be praised that our little daughter has recovered; I was terribly nervous and anxious. I calculate that you will soon start on your journey, and that by the 1st of October we shall be installed here. . . . I am much embarrassed in writing by the fact that his Excellency the Bavarian Ambassador is looking over my shoulder at my letter; therefore I close with heartiest love to your dear parents, and to you, my sweetheart, and with a kiss for the children. Do write to me at least twice a week, my angel; certainly you are not so busy that you could not do this. . . . Now I must vote so as to demolish the fleet and make it Prussian. God bless you.

Your most faithful

V. B.

HALLE, *January* 7, '52.

TO FRAU VON BISMARCK,

Frankfort-on-the-Main, Bockenheimer Chaussée, 40.

I have never, so far as I know, written to you from this place, and I hope that I shall not have to do so again hereafter. I have been trying very hard to think whether perhaps yesterday was not Friday, after all, when I left; it was certainly a *dies nefastus* (Zietelmann* will tell you what that means). At Giessen I got into an abominably cold room, with three windows that would not close, a bed that was too short and too narrow, dirty, and full of bugs. About two o'clock a shrewd idea occurred to me to put on the great fur coat, lie down on the bed in it,

* Government Councillor at the Legation.

and sleep for one hour; infamous coffee, than which I never tasted worse. At Guntershausen some ladies entered the first-class, and the smoking ceased; one of them was a superior lady of business (Zietelmann will tell you what that is), with two maids, a sable-cloak, &c.; she spoke German with an alternately Russian and English accent, very good French, a little English; but she seemed to me to hail from the Reezen-Jasse, and I fancied that one of the maids was her mother, or an elderly business friend (Zietelmann, &c., &c.). Between Guntershausen and Gerstungen one of the pipes of the engine quietly burst; the water ran out; there we were for an hour and a half in the open air, in a very pretty district and warm sunshine. I had taken a seat in the second-class in order to smoke, and there fell into the hands of a Berlin colleague in the Chamber, a Privy-Councillor, who had been taking the Homburg waters for a fortnight, and questioned me and called me to account, in the presence of several Jews, until, at my wits' end, I returned to the Princess from the Reezen-Jasse. By reason of the delay we reached Halle three hours late; the Berlin train had left long before. I shall have to sleep here, and travel on the *goods* train to-morrow morning at half-past six, arriving at two. Here at the railway station there are two hostelries; through an oversight I happened on the wrong one; a policeman walked up and down in the room and critically contemplated my beard while I ate a musty beefsteak. I am very miserable, but I shall eat the remains of the smoked goose-breast, drink a little port-wine, and then go to bed. Sleep well, my sweetheart. Many greetings to Leontine* and all our children.

Your most faithful

V. B.

* Fräulein von Schlabrendorff.

FRANKFORT, *February* 5, '52.

DEAR MOTHER,—Count Thun's illness gives me some unexpected leisure to-day, which I utilise to write you a few lines after a long silence. In the next room Johanna is babbling like a waterfall with a Frenchwoman, who is here to recommend another, now residing at Leipzig. Leontine is abominable enough not to want to stay. Both Johanna and I have begged her to do so, but she makes her sister an excuse; there must be some other reason that I cannot fathom. She seems to feel bored here. I should have preferred a sort of relative, who would have been more of a help and companion for Johanna than an actual governess for the children. But none of them will come. So it must be as God wills, and we must try the Leipziger. The boy has just come in with an infamous servant's cap on his head, puts his fat hands on the table and asks me: "Papa, what are you writing?" Little Marie stretches herself in the big chair, and remarks precociously, "I am inordinately fond of my youngster." Both scamps are cheerful and strong thus far, God be thanked. Leontine spoils the boy beyond measure, and accuses us of doing likewise with Marie, while I am conscious, withal, of my Aristidean fairness. Johanna's state of health is satisfactory, in comparison with what it formerly was. She is to try a course of Kreuznach or Nauheim in the summer, before her *accouchement*, unless the din of war should make these regions unapproachable. . . . On Sunday the Grand Duke gave a gala dinner at Darmstadt. Johanna was very stately in blue-and-white satin, and conversed at table with the Prince's heir-apparent, who is somewhat hard of hearing, and a stone-deaf old Minister with a sonorous voice; the reigning Princess, a Bavarian lady, said many flattering things about my wife's "sweet expression," which would have pleased your maternal heart. For the rest we lead a

life which, despite its commotion, is nevertheless monotonous. My time from morning tea until twelve is usually taken up with ambassadors' calls, and still more with reports by officials of our embassy; then I have meetings which end any time between the hours of one and four, and give me until five o'clock either to go out riding and attend to the necessary autographic correspondence, or only for the latter. At five an archaic old Councillor, who has held the post ever since 1816, and is called Kelchner, makes his appearance, to extort from me the necessary signatures before post time; then we dine, generally in the company of one or both attachés; and the hour for digestion, although I am often called away with the last bit still in my mouth, constitutes, as a rule, the most comfortable part of the day, when, surrounded by Johanna and the children, I lie smoking in the great tiger chair, and skim through some twenty newspapers. Then, at nine or half-past, word comes that the carriage is waiting, and, full of bitter reflections on the strangeness of social "amusements" in the European world, we rush off to dress. Johanna has the privilege of being indisposed occasionally, otherwise she gossips with mothers while I am dancing with the daughters, or talking solemn nonsense with the fathers. Towards twelve o'clock, or later still, we are home again, and I read in bed what has to be read, and then sleep until Johanna inquires for the third time whether I am *never* going to get up. Our house is over a thousand paces from the city gate, and that gives us some illusion of rural independence, which—even when, as to-day, the wind howls round the corners of the house, and the rain drives against the windows—I prefer to the clattering noise and stuffy streets of the city. My repeated trips to Berlin bring a disturbing variety into our existence. For me there is more honour than enjoyment there; but now, whenever I arrive, all is sunshine; the court spoils me, the great flatter me, the small want something of me or through me; yet hitherto not much effort has been needed to make me hold fast the idea that perhaps all this gilded grandeur may have

vanished the day after to-morrow; and that at a court entertainment I may see round about me quite as many cool backs as there are now kind faces. As the traveller sees in his mind's eye the warm and quiet place beside the fire, even so throughout all political good and bad weather, do I look forward to an independent home-life in the country as to an agreeable goal, which, so long as I am vigorous and active, I shall not press towards of my own initiative, but which I shall, nevertheless, be glad to see arrive as soon as it is God's will. The river of time meanwhile flows on the way that is decreed, and if I put my hand into it, I do so because I consider it to be my duty, and not with the idea of changing its direction thereby. . . .

May the Lord's unmerited mercy preserve us all in body and soul.

Your faithful son,

V. B.

GUNTERSHAUSEN, Saturday, *March* 13, '52.

MY DARLING,—Write me at once how you are; I fear that you caught cold in the railway station. I myself got a stomach-ache from the wretched draught and the cold stones, and could only restore myself by a plentiful consumption of Reinfeld sausage and malmsey, with which I began just after Bockenheim; at Vilbel not a drop remained in the bottle, but I felt perfectly well. God grant that all is going equally well with you and the children; you have so infected me with your anxieties, my sweetheart, that I departed full of anxiety. After Langgöns, I found some company in the first-class, a Herr von Kr-r-rusen-ster-r-rn, apparently a Russian naval officer, son-in-law of the assassinated Kotzebue (Sand, you know the story); he had with him his two sons, five and seven years old respectively. He seemed a good fellow, and the children are pretty, but they bored me, therefore I stayed here, because they

wished to go on to Eisenach, and to-morrow to Weimar. I arrived here towards seven, have eaten an indifferent beefsteak, and am writing you these two lines before going to sleep, close to an iron stove which is just as hot as the room is cold; however, the latter doubtless affords a fine view in daylight. This time I find the separation from you so particularly hard that I want at least to open communication by letter at once, and give you a token of love from this place. I hope it will find you and the children well; for this I pray God very diligently. May He be near you all with His mercy, and bring me to you again soon and safely. I did not believe that I should ever in my life experience a feeling of homesickness for Frankfort-on-the-Main, but I felt very sorrowful when at Bockenheim our house, and later the last Taunus peak which is visible from our rooms, disappeared from view. Farewell, my heart. Remembrances to Leontine.

Your most faithful

v. B.

(Postmark, BERLIN, *March* 25, '52).

MY BELOVED NAN,—I cannot leave this evening, because *Fra Dia** betook himself to Lusatia yesterday. I have had to dispose of several Danish conferences in his absence, and their outcome will have to be regulated with *Fra* to-morrow. I have therefore deferred my journey until to-morrow evening, and shall, God willing, embrace you, my darling, the day after to-morrow, and hope to find the occupants of No. 40, large and small, in good health. I have just dined with Malle, am going with her and Stolberg to the theatre, and I write you these few lines with an after-dinner cigar in my mouth. Meanwhile, do not worry about newspaper gossip, my sweet, and do not believe that I have any dangerous relations with Vincke

* Manteuffel.

and Harkort; all this is settled, I give you my word for it, and you know I would not lie to you about it; I would sooner say nothing if it were not true. God preserve you and the children, my beloved heart. Remembrances to Leontine.

Your most faithful

v. B.

FRANKFORT, *April* 4, '52.

DEAR MOTHER,—I wished to write to you to-day at length, but I do not know how far I shall progress after having given myself up for so long to enjoyment of Sunday leisure by taking a long stroll in the woods, that hardly an hour remains before the closing of the mail. I found such pretty, solitary paths, quite narrow, between the budding hazel and thorn-bushes, where only the thrush and the glede-kite were heard, and in the distance the bell of the church to which I was playing truant, that I could not find my way home again. Johanna is somewhat exhausted, because of her condition, or I should have had her in the woods, too, and perhaps we should still be there. . . . She has presented me with an excellent watch, of which I was much in need; I always wore her small one. In the Vincke matter I, like you, cannot sufficiently praise God's mercy that no misfortune has occurred on either side. I believe that for me it was very salutary to have felt myself so near unto death, and to have prepared myself for it; I know that you do not share my opinions on these subjects, but I have never felt so firm in faith, and so resigned to God's will, as I did when the matter was in progress. We can discuss it orally some time; now I only want to tell you how it happened. I had repeatedly been disgusted by V.'s rudeness to the government and ourselves, and was prepared to oppose him resolutely at the next opportunity that offered. He

accused me of want of diplomatic discretion, and said that hitherto the "burning cigar" was my only known achievement. He alluded to an occurrence at the Palace of the Diet, of which I had previously told him confidentially, at his particular request, as of something quite unimportant, but comical. I then retorted from the tribune that his remark overstepped the bounds not only of diplomatic but also of ordinary discretion, which one had a right to demand from every man of education. Next day he challenged me, through Herr von Sauken-Julienfelde, for four pistol-shots; I accepted after Oscar Arnim's proposal that we should fight with swords had been declined by Sauken. Vincke wished to defer the matter for forty-eight hours, to which I agreed. On the 25th, at 8 A.M., we rode to Tegel; to a charming spot in the woods by the seashore; it was beautiful weather, and the birds sang so gaily in the sunshine that, as soon as we entered the wood, all sad thoughts left me; save that of Johanna, which I had to drive from me by force, so as not to be affected by it. Arnim and Eberhard Stolberg were my seconds, and my brother was a very dejected spectator. Sauken and Major Vincke of the First Chamber were with V., as well as a Bodelschwingh (nephew of the Minister and of Vincke), as impartial witness. The latter declared before the matter began that the challenge seemed to him to be, under the circumstances, too stringent, and proposed that it should be modified to one shot apiece. Sauken, in V.'s name, agreed to this, and in fact, sent me word that the whole thing should be off if I declared I was sorry for my remark. As I could not truthfully do this, we took our positions, fired at Bodelschwingh's command, and both missed. God forgive me the grave sin that I did not at once recognise His mercy, but I cannot deny it: when I looked through the smoke and saw my adversary standing erect, a feeling of disappointment prevented me from participating in the general rejoicing, which caused Bodelschwingh to shed tears; the modification of the challenge annoyed me, and I would gladly have continued the

combat. But as I was not the insulted party, I could say nothing; it was over, and all shook hands. We rode home and I dined with my sister alone. All the world was dissatisfied with the outcome, but the Lord must know what He still intends to make of V. And now that I am cool, I am certainly very grateful that things happened so. What probably contributed much to it was the fact that a couple of very good pistols, which were originally intended to be used, were so loaded that for the moment they were quite useless, and we had to take those intended for the seconds, with which it was difficult to hit. An official interruption warns me that I must close—time is up. Only I still want to say that I had consulted old Stolberg, General Gerlach, Minister Uhden, and Hans about the duel beforehand; they were all of opinion that it had to be fought; Büchsel, too, saw no alternative, although he admonished me to desist. I spent an hour in prayer, with him and Stolberg, the evening before. I never doubted that I ought to appear, but I did doubt whether I should shoot at V. I did so without anger, and missed. Now, farewell, my dearly beloved mother. Love to father and every one from

Your faithful son,

V. B.

BERLIN, *Middle of May*, '52.

MY DARLING,—Before going out I will at least tell you that I have arrived safely, for later on I shall hardly find another quiet moment all day; I have already been disturbed during these few lines by Eberhard, who fell upon me in bed; by the *chasseur*, Engel, whom I have engaged (a handsome young fellow of twenty-three); by the barber, who proceeded to relieve me of the chin-tuft which you dislike, so that I now look just like a young girl with a little moustache. But I was better pleased with myself before.

Now I want to go to Polte Gerlach, to old Stolberg, then to divers Russians. It seems to me strange that everything is as far advanced here as in Frankfort; chestnuts and lilacs in fullest bloom, and two walnut trees in front of my window already give shade, and are certainly more advanced in foliage than those near Heidelberg on Wednesday. But on the road, in Hesse and Thuringia, it was backward compared to this place and Frankfort. Only these few lines to-day, so that you may know I am well. God's protection be with you and the children. Many regards to Leontine.

Your most faithful

v. B.

BERLIN, *June* 5, '52.

MY DARLING,—I have arrived here safely, and hope that you and the little folks are well. I am actually to go south; hitherto I had not considered it certain. . . . It seems to me that the agitation concerning the highest personages on the Rhine will end early in July, and that during the time when I most earnestly implore God to help you I shall be able to be with you, my heart, continually and undisturbed. Yesterday, towards evening, Lynar complained greatly about his condition, and he made as though he would give up the whole business. This alternation of impetuous starts and dead halts is his chief disease, and I have resolutely opposed it. He needs a change of air. Old Nostitz is just coming to see me.

The 6th.

My letter of yesterday from Sans Souci did not get off either, because, owing to the extraordinary rain, the train from Magdeburg was three-quarters of an hour late.

I drove at once from the station to the Hôtel des Princes, where I was delighted to find mother and all, even the barrel of the old double gun. M. was a trifle hoarse, otherwise well and in good spirits. Cecilia is again running like a lapwing. I remained until they could not help yawning. I am going there again to-day; unfortunately, I must leave again for Potsdam in the afternoon. Your letter of Thursday I read in bed yesterday, with pleasure and sadness. You have done quite well with Deter. Do not worry too much; and pray God with me that we shall soon meet again in good health. Do not be anxious if my next letter is long in coming. I shall not be able to write before Wednesday from Vienna, and it will not reach F. before Friday night, nor be with you before Saturday morning. The Lord keep you, my love. Greetings to Leontine and the children.

Your most faithful

v. B.

VIENNA, *June* 9, '52.

MY DARLING,—I arrived here safely with Lynar last night, and, after attending to the urgent despatches, we went to bed with a good supper and a bottle of iced champagne. The journey was warm, otherwise charming. They still have the abominable old carriages, in which we spent a night with the Sevitts, the first-class hardly better than our third. The country was pretty, by starlight and sunrise, between Dresden and Prague; at noon, in the Moravian Mountains, which we missed, you remember, sleeping as we passed them. At sunset we arrived in Vienna. I lived entirely in '47 while passing the Prater, along the Jägerzeil and past the Lamb, and into the city, along a colonnade, where I remembered that while walking there we sulked a bit for the first time—I forget why, but probably through my fault. For how much have we to thank the Lord since

then! At that time you did not believe that we should have children. . . . God's gracious protection be with you all. Lynar is breakfasting, and sends remembrances.

Your most faithful

v. B.

VIENNA, *June* 11, '52.

MY DARLING,—"Don't like it 't all 'ere," as Schrenk says, although it was so agreeable in '47 with you; but not only do I miss you, but I find myself superfluous here, and that is worse than I can explain to one of your unpolitical temperament. If I were now here for pleasure alone, as of yore, I could not complain; all with whom I have hitherto become acquainted are remarkably amiable, and though the city is hot and its streets narrow, yet it is a magnificent city, nevertheless. Business, on the other hand, is exceedingly dull; either these people are under no pressure of need to deal with us, or they ascribe to us a greater need than we have. I fear the opportunity for coming to an understanding will pass by unimproved; that will be a bad set-back for us, for my embassy is looked upon as a very conciliatory step, and our government will not soon send another who is so willing to arrange matters, and at the same time has such a free hand as I. Forgive me for writing you politics, but out of the abundance of the heart, &c. Intellectually, I am drying up altogether in this commotion, and fear I shall again acquire a taste for it. I am just returning from the opera, with old Westmoreland; "Don Giovanni," by a good Italian company, which made me doubly conscious how miserable the Frankfort Theatre is. Yesterday I was at Schönbrunn, and thought of our adventurous moonlight expedition at the sight of the tall hedges and the white statues in the green niches; also looked at the cosy little garden into which we strayed at

first; it is strictly forbidden ground, and the watchman, who stood there then, too, prohibits even a passing glance into it now.

VIENNA, *June* 14, '52.

MY BELOVED HEART,—By rights I ought now to sit down and write a full report to his Majesty concerning a long and fruitless interview I had to-day with Count Buol, and also about an audience with the Archduchess, the Emperor's mother. But I have just taken a walk on the high ramparts, and from them I saw a beautiful sunset behind the Leopoldsberg, so that now I am much more inclined to think of you than of business. I stood for a long time on the Red Tower Gate, which commands a view of the Jägerzeil, and from which one can also see the Lamb, where we stayed, with the café before it. At the Archduchess's I was in a room which opens on the little garden into which we once found our way secretly and thoughtlessly. Yesterday I heard "Lucia"—in Italian, very good. All this so stirs my longing for you that I am quite sad and unsettled; it is terrible to be so alone in the world, when one is no longer accustomed to it; I am in quite a Lynaric mood. Nothing but calls, and making the acquaintance of strangers, with whom I have always to talk of the same things. Every one knows that I have not been here very long, but in these few days I have had to answer the great question as to whether I have been here before about two hundred times, and be thankful that they have this topic of conversation. This may be a very nice place for folks bent on enjoyment, for it offers all that conduces to outward amusement. But I am longing for Frankfort as if it were Kniephof, and certainly do not wish to come here. F. must lie just where the sun set, over the Mannhartsberg yonder; and when it had set here, it was still shining with you for over half-an-hour. It is terribly

far. How different it was here with you, my heart, and with Salzburg and Meran in prospect; I have grown terribly old since then. . . . It is very cruel that we must spend such a long period of our brief life apart; that time is lost, and cannot be brought back. God alone knows why He allows others to remain together who are quite content when apart, like an aged friend of mine, who travelled with me as far as Dresden—he had to sit in the same compartment with his wife all the time, and could not smoke! And we always have to correspond from a great distance. We will make up for all this by loving each other a great deal more when we are together again. If only we keep well I shall not complain! To-day I had the great pleasure of receiving, *viâ* Berlin, your letter of last Thursday; that is the second since I left Frankfort; surely none has been lost? I was very happy and thankful that all of you are well. Old Westmoreland is still nicer to me than any one here; he comes to see me every day and still raves about Berlin. Frau Meiendorf is very friendly, and I must not be ungrateful . . . but I am homesick for our little house and all in it. As soon as I find myself once more on the tiresome old Thuringian railroad I shall be in high spirits, and still more so when I catch a glimpse of our light from Bockenheim; I must travel about nine hundred miles before then, not including two hundred and fifty miles from Pesth back to this place. How gladly I shall travel them, once I am seated in the train! I shall probably give up going *viâ* Munich, for from here to M. it takes fifty hours by coach, and by water it is still longer; and I shall anyway have to make a verbal report in Berlin. About politics I can, fortunately, write nothing; for even if the English courier who takes this to Berlin is a safeguard against our post-office, the Taxis scoundrels will, nevertheless, get hold of it.

Be sure to write to me in detail as to your personal condition. Remember me to mother, our relations, if they are still with you, Leontine, the children, Stolberg, Wentzel, and all the rest. Farewell, my angel. God preserve you.

Your most faithful

v. B.

VIENNA, *June* 19, 1852.

MY HEART,—I am delighted that our dear ones reached you safely, and I grew quite melancholy at the thought of having to stay here so far away, and all alone, too. Werthern, the Secretary of Legation, is home on leave. The other day Lynar and I made an excursion up the mountains on the Leopoldsberg, behind Nussdorf, where we embarked once upon a time ; and in the golden evening twilight we had a look at our former route, up the Danube, to Kloster-Neuburg, and just then a steamer was coming from Linz—the *Austria ;* on which, if I am not mistaken, we travelled. . . . Why do you think with dread and pain of the coming of the new baby ? I am firmly convinced that the Lord will grant our prayers, and will not separate us ; and I also hope to convince you of this, as soon as I am with you again, my darling. My happy married life and the children whom God has given me seem to me to be like the rainbow in my life—a pledge of atonement after the deluge of degeneracy and want of love which covered my soul in former years. As soon as I am alone, as here, the old sad and desolate spirit of the past comes upon me, and I feel how little fitted I am to endure an outwardly solitary life. The grace of God will not forsake my soul which He has once touched, and will not sever the bond by which chiefly He has held and guided me along the slippery path of that world in which, without having a choice in the matter, I am placed. Trust cheerfully, my darling, and pray in faith ; I have the conviction that I cannot do without you, not for a long, long time yet, and consequently I have faith that God will preserve you to me. Do not simply remain quiet and wait, but offer up earnest prayers, and trust in Christ's promise to listen.

I have had as yet no chance of going to Laxenburg, and

to-day it rains continually, so that I am staying quietly in my room, and shall write very long reports later on. . . . The town is empty and the heat unbearable; stupidly enough, one lives in the centre of it, instead of on the Prater or the Jägerzeil; it is the fashion to do so, and it is as incorrect to live outside the ramparts of the middle town, as to appear on the Prater after the last day of May, or in Schönbrunn before the 1st of June, or to drive in anything but a closed glass case of a hackney coach, even in the country, if one wishes to be tolerated.

Do not believe the newspaper nonsense that I shall not come before the end of July, or that I shall be transferred to this place permanently. I certainly hope, God willing, to be with you the first three days of July, perhaps sooner, and I am opposing any transfer to Vienna. It is much nicer at home, and it is quite impossible to live here as a married Ambassador with the same salary as at F. Embrace my beloved little mother for me, and all aunts, cousins, and children. The Reddentiners have given me reason to hope that after my return they will again pay us a visit from Rehme. Do urge this. May the Lord take you and the whole household into His gracious keeping. Farewell.

Your most faithful

v. B.

VIENNA, *June* 21, 1852.

Many thanks, my dear, for your sweet little letter of Thursday, just received; only a word of heartfelt love and longing for you; I feel very tender every time I think of you. Frau Meiendorf is indignant about my sentimental longing, which drives me away from business in order to play *sœur grise* at F., as she says. The courier urges haste.

Farewell, you dearest heart. My fingers are stiff from writing. Love to M.

Your most faithful

v. B.

V., 21*st*.—Six P.M., have not yet dined. To-morrow to Ofen.

OFEN, *June* 23, '52.

MY DARLING,—I have just left the steamer, and do not know how better to fill up the moment at my disposal until Hildebrand follows with my things than by sending you a love-token from this very easterly but pretty spot. The Emperor has graciously assigned me quarters in his palace, and I am sitting here in a large vaulted chamber at the open window, through which come the peals of the evening bells of Pesth. The view outside is charming. The castle stands high; immediately below me the Danube, spanned by the suspension bridge; behind it Pesth, which would remind you of Dantzig, and farther away the endless plain extending far beyond Pesth, disappearing in the bluish-red evening mist. To the left of Pesth I look up the Danube, far, very far, away; to my left, *i.e.* on the right-hand shore, it is fringed first by the city of Ofen, behind it hills like the Berici near Vicenza, blue and bluer, then bluish-red in the evening sky, which glows behind. In the midst of both cities is a large sheet of water as at Linz, intercepted by the suspension bridge and a wooded island. It is really splendid; it only lacks you, my angel, so that I might enjoy this prospect *with you;* then it would be *quite* perfect. The road hither, at least from Gran to Pesth, would also have pleased you. Imagine the Odenwald and the Taunus moved close together, the waters of the Danube filling the distance between, and occasionally, particularly near Wisserad, a touch of Dürrenstein-Agstein. The dark side of the trip was the sunny side! It burned as if they

wanted to grow Tokay on the steamer, and the crowd of travellers was large; but, just imagine, not one Englishman; evidently they have not yet discovered Hungary. For the rest, there were queer fellows enough, washed and unwashed, of all Oriental and Occidental nations. . . . By this time I am becoming impatient as to Hildebrand's whereabouts; I am lying in the window, half musing in the moonlight, half waiting for him as for a mistress, for I long for a clean shirt. . . . If you could only be here for a moment, and could now look at the dull, silvery Danube, the dark hills with a pale-red background, and the lights which are shining up from Pesth below, Vienna would go down a good deal in your estimation compared to Buda-Pescht, as the Hungarian calls it. You see I am not only a lover of, but an enthusiast for nature. Now I will soothe my excited blood with a cup of tea, as Hildebrand has actually put in an appearance, and then I shall go to bed and dream of you, my love. Last night I had only four hours' sleep, and the court here is terribly matutinal; the young gentleman himself rises as early as five o'clock, so that I should indeed be a bad courtier were I to sleep much later. Therefore I bid you good-night from afar, with a side-glance at a gigantic teapot and an enticing plate of cold meat *en aspic*, including tongue. Where did I get that song which haunts me continually to-day—"*Over the blue mountain, over the white sea-foam, come, thou beloved one, come to thy lonely home*"? I don't know who can have sung that to me in *auld lang syne*. May God's angels guard you to-day, as in the past.

Your most faithful

v. B.

The 24th.

After having slept very well, although on a wedge-shaped pillow, I bid you good-morning, my heart. The

whole panorama before me is bathed in such bright, burning sunshine that I cannot look out at all without being blinded. Until I begin my calls I shall sit here breakfasting and smoking all alone in a very spacious apartment —four rooms, all deeply vaulted, two about the size of our dining-room, thick walls as at Schönhausen, gigantic walnut-wood presses, blue silk furniture, on the floor large spots, an ell in size, which a more vivid imagination than mine might take for blood, but which I decidedly declare to be ink;—an unconscionably awkward scribe must have lodged here, or another Luther who repeatedly hurled big inkstands at his opponents! . . . Exceedingly strange figures, brown, with broad hats and wide trousers, are floating about on long wooden rafts in the Danube below. I regret I am not an artist; I should like to let you see these wild faces, moustached, long-haired, with excited black eyes, and ragged, picturesque draperies fluttering about them, as I saw them yesterday. . . . Farewell, my heart. God bless you and our present and future children.

Your most faithful

v. B.

Evening.

I have not yet found an opportunity of sending this. Again the lights are shining up from Pesth, lightning appears on the horizon in the direction of the Theiss, and above us is starlight. I have been in uniform most of the day, handed my credentials to the young ruler of this country at a solemn audience, and received a very pleasing impression—the vivacity of a youth of twenty, coupled with a well-considered repose of manner. He *can* be very winning, I have seen that; whether he is always inclined to be so, I do not know, and he need not, for that matter. At any rate, he is exactly suited to the needs of this country, too much so for the peace of its neighbours, if God does not

give him a peace-loving heart. After dinner all the court went for an excursion into the mountains, to a romantic spot called after the Fair Shepherdess, long since dead, whom King Matthias Corvinus loved many hundred years ago. The view thence is over woody hills, like those on the Neckar banks towards Ofen, its castle, and the plain. A popular festival had brought up thousands, who crowded round the Emperor, as he went among them, and greeted him with noisy cheers; they danced Czardas, they waltzed, sang, played, climbed into the trees, and crowded the courtyard. On a grassy slope a supper-table was laid for about twenty persons, who sat along one side only, so as to get a free view of wood, hill, town, and country. The Hungarians were climbing among the branches of the high beeches overhead; behind, and close to us, a densely crowded and surging mass of people, and, beyond, alternately, the music of horns and the singing of wild gipsy melodies. Illumination, moonlight, and evening glow, blending with torches through the wood; the whole, unaltered, might have served as a great scenic effect in a romantic opera. Beside me sat the white-bearded Archbishop of Gran, primate of Hungary, in a black silk gown, with a red cloak; on the other side a very amiable and elegant general of cavalry, Prince Liechtenstein. You see, the picture was rich in contrasts. Then we drove home by moonlight, escorted by torch-bearers; and whilst I smoke my evening cigar I am writing to my darling, and leaving the documents until to-morrow. . . . To day I heard the story of how this castle was stormed by the insurgents three years ago, when the brave General Hentzi and the entire garrison were cut down after a wonderfully heroic defence. The black spots on my floor are in part burns, and where I am now writing to you the bursting shells then danced about, and the combat finally raged on the top of smoking *débris*. It was only put in order again a few weeks ago for the Emperor's arrival. Now it is very quiet and cosy up here; I hear only the ticking of a clock and the distant rolling of wheels from below. For the second time I send

you a good-night into the distance from here. May angels watch over you—a grenadier with a bearskin cap does so over me; I see his bayonet two arm-lengths away from me, projecting six inches above the window-sill, and reflecting my light. He is standing on the terrace over the Danube, and is, perhaps, thinking of his Nanne, too.

SZOLNOK, *June* 27, '52.

In the atlases you have you will find a map of Hungary and on it a river Theiss, follow it along past Szegeden to its source and you will find a place called Szolnok—from it your beloved is writing to you. Yesterday I went by rail from Pesth to Alberti-Irsa, where a young Prince Windischgrätz, who is married to a Princess of Mecklenburg, niece of our King, is garrisoned. I called on this lady that I might inform the Grand Duchess, her mother, as to her health. The place is situated at the edge of the Hungarian steppes between the Danube and Theiss, which I wanted to look at for the fun of it. They did not allow me to travel without an escort, as the neighbourhood is infested with bands of mounted robbers, called Petyars. After a comfortable breakfast under the shade of a beautiful lime-tree, I mounted a very low rack-waggon, with straw sacks and three steppe horses before it; the lancers loaded their carbines, sat erect, and away we went at a tearing gallop. Hildebrand and a hired Hungarian footman were on the front sack, and for driver we had a dark-brown peasant with a moustache, broad-brimmed hat, long black hair which shone with grease, a shirt ending above the stomach and leaving visible a dark-brown band of his own skin about as broad as a man's hand; below this white trousers, each leg of which is wide enough for a woman's skirt, reaching to the knees, where the spurred boots begin. Imagine firm turf, level as a table, along which, for miles around, as far as the horizon, one sees nothing but the tall,

bare beams of the bucket-wells which have been dug for the half-wild horses and oxen. We passed thousands of white-and-brown oxen, timid as deer, with horns as long as a man's arm ; shaggy, mean-looking horses, kept by mounted, half-naked herds with lance-like staves ; endless droves of pigs, among them invariably a donkey, which carries the herd's sheepskin (*bunda*), and occasionally himself ; great swarms of bustards, rabbits, marmot-like susliks ; occasionally wild geese, ducks, lapwings rose up from a brackish pond as we passed, during the three hours in which we covered the thirty-five miles to Ketskemet, with a slight pause at a czarda (lonely hostelry). Ketskemet is a village whose streets, when void of inhabitants, recall the smaller end of Schönhausen, only it has forty-five thousand inmates, all peasants, unpaved streets, low houses closed against the sun in Oriental fashion, with large cattle-yards. A foreign Ambassador was such an unaccustomed sight there, and my Hungarian servant made such a show of calling me Excellency, that they at once gave me a guard of honour ; the authorities called on me, and fresh horses were requisitioned for me. I spent the evening with a pleasant set of officers, who insisted on my retaining the escort, and told me many robber stories. The worst strong-holds of the robbers are said to be just in the region towards which I was going, along the Theiss, where the marshes and wilds render their extermination well-nigh impossible. These Petyars are splendidly mounted and armed ; in bands of fifteen or twenty they assault travellers and invade cattle-yards, and next day they are a hundred miles away. They are polite to respectable people. I had left most of my ready money and the nice little striking clock with Prince Windischgrätz, and only had a little linen with me, and really I had some inclination to become more intimately acquainted with these mounted bandits, with great furs, double-barrelled guns in their hands and pistols in their belts, whose leaders are said to wear black masks and to belong to the landed gentry settled hereabouts. A few days previously several gendarmes had fallen in a fight

with them, in which two robbers had been caught, court-martialled, and shot at Ketskemet. One never experiences such things in our own dull part of the world. About the time when you awoke this morning, you hardly thought that at that moment I was flying in headlong gallop over the *pusta* (steppe) in Cumania, in the vicinity of Felegyháza and Csongrad with Hildebrand, and a kindly, sunburnt officer of lancers beside me, each one with loaded pistols lying in the hay in front of him, and a detachment of lancers, carbines ready in hand, galloping behind. Three fast little horses drew us, unhesitatingly apostrophised as *Rosa* (pronounce Ruscha), *Esillak* (Star), and *Petyar* (Vagabond); the driver continually addressing them by name and in a voice of entreaty, till at last holding the whip-handle diagonally over his head, he called out *mega! mega!* (more! more!) when the gallop changed to a mad race — a very exhilarating sensation. The robbers did not show themselves; probably they already knew before dawn, as my entertaining brown lieutenant said, that I was travelling under escort, but certainly some of them were among the worthy-looking, stately peasants, their embroidered, sleeveless sheepskin coats reaching to the ground, who keenly watched us at the stations, and greeted us with a respectful *istem adiamek* (God be praised). The heat of the sun was intense all day long, and my face is as red as a lobster. I have done eighty-five miles in twelve hours, including from two to three hours spent in changing horses and waiting, as the twelve horses required for ourselves and the escort had first to be caught. Moreover, about one-third of the distance consisted of deep quicksands and dunes, like those at Stolpmünde. At five I arrived here, where the streets are enlivened by a motley crowd of Hungarians, Slavs, and Wallachians (Sz. is a village of about six thousand inhabitants, and has a railroad and steamboat-station on the Theiss). The wildest and craziest gipsy melodies penetrate to my room, for they sing in a sickly, complaining, minor key through their noses and with wide-open mouths,

ditties of black eyes, and of a robber's heroic death, which remind one of the wind when it howls Lettish songs in the chimney. The women are generally well formed, but, save a few exceptionally handsome ones, are not pretty; they all have jet-black hair, braided in tails, with red ribbons. The married women wear either gaudy green-and-red cloths or little red-and-gold plush hoods on their heads, a very handsome yellow silk scarf over shoulders and breast, short black or dark-blue skirts, and red morocco boots which extend up under the dress. They have a lively colouring, generally yellowish brown in the face, and large, burning black eyes. On the whole, such a troop of women affords a play of colours that would please you, every colour in the costume being as striking as possible. After arriving at five, and while waiting for dinner, I had a swim in the Theiss, saw them dance the Czardas, and regretted that I could not draw so as to sketch these wonderful figures for you; then ate some *paprika* (chicken), *stürl* (fish), and *tick;* drank a good deal of Hungarian wine, wrote to Nanne, and now want to go to bed, if the gipsy music will let me sleep. Good-night, my angel. *Istem adiamek.*

PESTH, 28*th.*

The heat was again scorching to-day, it has made the skin peel off my face. Now there is a hot storm, which is blowing so violently across the steppe that the houses shake. I swam in the Danube, and looked at the magnificent chain bridge from below, then I paid some visits, and heard some gipsies play very well on the promenade, and now I will soon go to bed. This place on the borders of the Pusta, where it begins to be cultivated, reminds me of Pomerania. The gipsies are greyish-black in the face, and marvellously dressed; the children are quite naked except for a string of glass beads round the neck. Two women had fine regular features, and were cleaner and smarter than the men. When the Hungarians want to

hear a dance again, they call out in astonishment *Hody wol?* (How was that?), and look at each other questioningly as if they had not understood properly, although they know the music by heart. They certainly are comical people, but I like them. . . . My escort of lancers was not useless, after all. At the time when I went southward from Ketskemet, sixty-three waggons were going to Körös, in a northerly direction, to market. Two hours later they were stopped and plundered. Because a colonel who happened to be riding in front of this carriage would not halt, they sent several shots after him, and shot a horse through the neck, but without making it fall; and because he returned the fire, while galloping away with two servants, they preferred to confine their attention to the remaining travellers, who were unarmed. Otherwise they hurt no one, only plundered eighty odd persons, or, rather, laid them under contribution; for they don't take all one's belongings, but demand a sum from each one according to his fortune or their own necessity; for instance, they will quietly watch you count forty florins, which they have demanded, out of a purse containing one thousand florins, without touching the remainder. They are bandits, therefore, who can be reasoned with.

VIENNA, 30*th*.

Here I am again, sitting in the "Roman Emperor." Found your very dear letter from Coblentz, and thanked God that all was well with you. . . . I intend leaving here in the course of next week, and hurrying over to you, my angel, by way of Berlin. I have, as a matter of fact, no leave of absence, nor shall I ask for any, but I shall arrange the matter verbally at Berlin. They will realise that I *must* be with you now. Give mother my love; greet Leontine and the children.

Your most faithful

v. B.

OSTEND, *August* 19, '53.

MY DEAREST,—I hope that by this time you, with your three little chicks, are clucking happily in your nest, and are settled there, warm and comfortable. . . . I suppose you must have arrived at Interlaken either two evenings ago, or else yesterday morning. . . . So far I have taken three baths, besides the one to-day, and liked them very much; strong surf and sandy shore. Most people bathe just below the dyke which forms the promenade, men and women together; the ladies in very unbecoming long skirts of dark wool, the men in jerseys, jacket and trousers in one piece, so that the arms and legs are almost entirely uncovered. Only the consciousness of a perfect figure can make a man bold enough to show himself off thus to the whole world of ladies; and although I possess this consciousness to a high degree, still I generally prefer the more out-of-the-way *paradis* or *bain des sauvages*, where there are only men, in the costume indicated by the name of the place! I don't like to have the wet thing next to my skin. My time is a good deal taken up with the Prince, otherwise I divide the time which is not devoted to bathing and eating, between the Vrints, the O'Donnels, O'Haras, Goltz, Eulenberg, Einsiedel (Potsdam), and target-shooting. No one is inclined for sailing, they all fear sea-sickness. The oysters are not good yet, but on the other hand the lobster is excellent. It will depend on Schele's reply whether I shall still go to Norderney or not; if I meet him elsewhere, I shall remain here two or three weeks longer and will then come straight back to you, my heart. I have just finished my tea while writing and am now going to the Prince for business and then I shall accompany him to the *Paradis*. Engel occasionally finds himself in conversational difficulties, which for the first few days almost brought him to starvation. In most cases I

find that I get on better with Flemish than with French. At any rate I understand the people pretty well, though they do not understand me, no matter what pains I take. Kindest remembrances to our parents and children, Jeannette and Eugenie, and God bless you all.

Your most faithful

v. B.

BRUSSELS, *August* 21, '53.

MY DEAREST,—I was delighted and thankful to get your letter from Bellerive yesterday afternoon. By this time I hope you are comfortably settled at Interlaken, and have found a letter from me there, as well as received another—probably to-day. I left Ostend with regret, and to-day I look back on it with longing. I found an old love of mine there again, and she is unchanged, and as charming as she was when I first knew her! I am feeling the separation deeply just now, and am looking forward impatiently to the moment when I shall see her again at Norderney, and shall throw myself on her billowy breast! I cannot understand why we do not always live at the seaside, or why I allowed myself to be persuaded to spend two days in this heap of stones with its tiresome regularity, where I shall have to see bull-fights, Waterloo, and pompous processions. . . . Much love to all, and twice as much to you.

Your most faithful

v. B.

AMSTERDAM, *August* 24, '53.

MY DEAREST,—In Brussels and Antwerp I was not able to get a moment of quiet, there was so much going on, and so much to see, so I am making use here of the gloaming,

between dinner and theatre to tell you that I am well, and that I think of you with warmest love. I have passed a horrible night on a camp-stool, leaving Antwerp at one o'clock at night on an overcrowded steamer. Along a labyrinthine course of Scheldt, Meuse, and Rhine, I arrived early this morning in Rotterdam, and here about four o'clock. This is a strange place; many streets are something like those in Venice; some just like them, with water up to the walls, others with canals as high-roads, and narrow paths planted with lime trees in front of the houses. These last, with fantastically shaped gables, queer and smoky, almost like spectres, and chimneys that look like a man standing on his head with his legs stretched wide apart. But what is different to Venice is the active life and movement here, and the many fine shops, one Gerson after another, more magnificently decorated than those of Paris and London, as I remember them. When I listen to the sound of the bells, a long clay pipe in my mouth, and look through the forest of masts and over the canals at the gables and chimneys, fantastically blurred in the twilight, all the Dutch ghost-stories of my childhood about Dolph Heyliger and Rip Van Winkle and the Flying Dutchman come back to me. . . .

I am very glad indeed to have seen Holland; from Rotterdam here it is meadow-land, eternally green and flat, and with many bushes, and pasturing cattle, and some cities cut out of old picture-books; no arable land at all. Farewell, my beloved heart. Much love to all who are with you.

Your most faithful

V. B.

NORDERNEY, *August* 27, '53.

MY BELOVED HEART,—I came here last evening in a big Dutch tub, amid thunder, lightning, and rain; have

had a glorious sea-bath to-day, after being without one for a week, and I am now sitting in a little fisherman's house, with a feeling of great loneliness and longing for you, which is partly increased by the cries of children who are with the landlord near by, and partly by a melancholy accompaniment from the whistling rage of the storm round the gable and flag-pole. . . . I wrote to you last from Amsterdam, and from Brussels before that. Since then I have seen a charming little country—West Friesland—quite flat, but so bushy and green, with hedges, and pretty cottages standing alone in the woods, so that one longs for the quiet independence that seems to reign there — but perhaps my approbation should be attributed especially to the fact that all the girls are pretty as pictures, just as they are at Linz and Gmunden, only taller and slighter than there, fair—complexions like milk and roses, and a golden helmet-like head-dress that is very becoming. The language is curious. At Groningen there was a picture of the Ascension hanging over my bed, with the inscription, "Journey of the Saviour." May we all travel in like manner some day!

I long for the south, but, above all, for my place by your side, my home "*wherever thou art.*" A thousand remembrances to big and small. Farewell.

Your most faithful

V. B.

NORDERNEY, *August* 30, '53.

MY BELOVED,—It is horribly dull here; cold, bare little houses; it rains continually; every one sulks in his den; there is no place of rendezvous, and with the exception of the quarter of an hour which I spend in the water, I find it so depressing that I cannot even make up my mind to work, and should much prefer to lie in bed from morning to night reading novels. I cannot make out whether it is the

nine additional years or the advanced season, but I cannot conjure up the pleasant impression of 1844, and I wish I had remained at Ostend. The day before yesterday I had the pleasure of receiving your letter from Thun, the second so far. I am surprised that you had not (on the 20th), received my first from Ostend. I tell you, not because I wish to praise myself, but that you may be able to check them, that I have written you six letters besides this one—three, I believe, from Ostend, one from Brussels, one from Amsterdam, and two from here. There is really no lack of pleasant people here, but one does not meet them. I like the family of Kniephausen, the Hanoverian Ambassador in Berlin, for instance; then there are about a dozen rather youthful Berlin sub-lieutenants and lawyers. Strange to say, not one of them recognised me, so that, whilst I was sitting in their midst at supper, they discussed me freely, and spoke of the "false" report of my arrival. My neighbour described me as a "merry fellow," and next day there was a most amusing recognition. The royal families of Nassau and Hesse live in strict retirement, on the plea of mourning. I believe that up to now I am the only man who has been admitted into their domestic circle. The ladies must be horribly bored, whilst their husbands amuse themselves with target-shooting and roulette.

Thus far I wrote this morning; now I have bathed, shot, and played bowls. The sun is shining, and I am waiting for the dinner-bell. . . . I rejoice with you that you all are enjoying yourselves, and I thank God that He has so far blessed you with health. I read Romans xii., not on the balcony by moonlight, however, but on a seaweed mattress, with the storm and rain rattling against the window. It is a chapter which makes one realise how weak in faith and how wicked one is. I would feed my enemy if he were hungry, but bless him—it would be a very superficial blessing, were I to give it at all! May God make me better. Like a cruel father, I really forgot little Mary's birthday. Kiss the children for me, and remember me most kindly to the grown-ups. I must go to dinner, otherwise I shall lose

my seat. Kleist sends kind remembrances. Farewell, my beloved.

Your most faithful

v. B.

NORDERNEY, *September* 5, '53.

MY BELOVED HEART,—. . . I long to be with you, although I have nothing else to complain of, and am leading a life which is mentally very restful. At about eight I bathe—that is the best thing here; splendid waves, high as trees, and like a waterfall when they break; soft sand and no stones. I always find it hard to leave them, to climb around them for about two hours among the miles of sand-dunes, to frighten the rabbits and birds, and to lie in the warm sand among the wild whortleberry bushes, smoking, dreaming, or thinking of Interlaken. The rest of the day is trifled away with bowls, target-shooting, dinner, boating, walks on the beach, and supper, so that I don't know where the day is gone, and, with a shy glance at my pens and paper lying ready, I slip, towards eleven o'clock, through my study into my bedroom, to sleep capitally on a seaweed mattress.

When I had written thus far yesterday, a Göttingen friend arrived suddenly with his wife to call on me. I have passed to-day with him, and he leaves again early to-morrow. I have always found it difficult to take up a melody that has passed away into silence again after twenty years. I remembered a jolly student, full of liveliness and wit, and I find a sickly official, whose buoyancy has been quelled and whose sympathies have been narrowed by the long pressure of parochial interests for years past. There is something which always stamps the provincial German; my friend has still a clear mind and an honest soul, but there is something about him which suggests a person who has spent many years in prison, and whose thoughts

linger among the cobwebs that he used to watch there, or with the one green tree that stood before his window. The fact that he feels happy is comforting, and at the same time depressing, to me; he seems to love his wife, and has three children. He is staying in the house with me, in Kleist's deserted place. I have taken him in here as my guest. . . . Farewell, my darling. The blessing of the Lord be with you and all Interlaken.

Your most faithful

v. B.

NORDERNEY, *September* 7, 1853.

PARIS, *August* 27, 55.

MY DEAREST,—For three days the paper has been lying ready to write to you, and some wave of this mad activity has always driven me away from the table. There is always something to do, and still it's busy idleness. The Queen of England has just left in state drawn by eight led horses, at a walking pace, with a large retinue, the thunder of guns, and all the accessories; then I lunched with the Duke of Ratibor, and continued the endless business of seeing Paris. Yesterday there was a dinner and ball at Hatzfeld's. All nationalities were present except Russians. The day before yesterday a ball at Versailles, very magnificent, and many remarkable people to see. I was presented to Queen Victoria, the Emperor and Empress, and was treated with remarkable kindness, according to the custom here. The Empress is more beautiful than any of the pictures I have seen of her, uncommonly graceful and charming, more in the style of Malle than of Nelly,* but with a longer, narrower face than the former, more beautiful eyes and mouth, and, of course, fabulous diamonds. The exhibition is tiresome except for the pictures. Millions

* Vrints.

of the most varied kinds of things whose name no one knows, and whose number, added to the deafening din of the machines, robs one of all clearness of impression. It would be necessary to devote several weeks of one's time exclusively to it, in order to get one's bearings there at all. To-day I dine with Count Walewsky, the Manteuffel of Paris, who has a very agreeable wife, an Italian. These everlasting dinners leave me no chance of resting or of going to the theatre; dinner at seven, lasting, with coffee and cigars, till nine; and then an extra hour is wasted coming and going, because of the distances. When they speak here of a distance like that from us to Moritz Bethmann's, they say: "*C'est tout près d'ici.*" It is worse than in London, where one goes about in only one part of the city. Many streets of earlier times have entirely vanished, and their places have been taken by long, straight ones like the Friedrichstrasse, with four hundred and more house numbers. . . . I have got through Paris now; though I do not mean to say that it has not been very interesting to me. . . . The true taste for travel has really left me. If we can find out some pretty little place for a few weeks, I should like to go there with you, but I should have misgivings about bringing you here. The hotels are extraordinarily overcrowded; six hundred thousand strangers are said to be here. I write it in full, otherwise you might think I had put a cipher too many. Everything is very expensive, and I am very grateful to Hatzfeld for the little room (not like my red one) in which I live and sleep. . . . I am very well, and I thank God that you are also. The weather is glorious, especially in the evening, when we sit smoking in the garden by moonlight within view of the Seine, and of the trees and lights in the Tuileries Gardens on the opposite side. Love a thousand times over to our parents.

Your most faithful

v. B.

PARIS, *September* 2, '55.

MY DEAREST,—The importunities of friends, and certain other causes combine to keep me here a few days longer. I had other political acquaintances to make, and want to take part in a stag-hunt to-morrow at Fontainebleau. Forgive this lengthening of my absence; I promise you to make up for it by coming home in good health and spirits, and needing no sea-bathing. Also I shall probably give up going round by Ostend, and thereby gain a few days. In any case, I shall come on one of the last three days of this week, Saturday at the latest. It is a wonderful city, this Paris. Think of ten Frankforts side by side, lots of streets full of shops like the Zeil, and in every one of them the same noise, as in the Gallen Gasse after the arrival of three crowded trains; then ten quieter Frankforts set round it. Part of the neighbourhood is very pretty, something like the bank of the lake at Zürich, without water (unless one counts the Seine, which is smaller than the Main); green and hilly, with many nests of white houses, towns, and villages. If we are alive and well next year, I should like to go with you, *viâ* Lyons, to Marseilles, then along the Pyrenees, and back through Bayonne, Bordeaux, and Paris. It is a trip of three weeks—less, if desired—and for us both would cost about a thousand florins. I was very much tempted to do it now, but do not care to alone. We have had stormy autumn weather for two days, with falling leaves, and half the day I am homesick, the other half I have not time to be so. An answer to this letter will not reach me here; if it has not already occurred to you to write to me here, I shall have to content myself without news, trusting in God's mercy that all are well at home, and especially you, my love. We may still have the pleasure of enjoying the Rhine air for a couple of weeks, and perhaps the air of Switzerland, too, if the King does not come. We will

talk this over together in four or five days. Until then, farewell, my heart. Give my love to our dear parents and children. God keep you all.

Your most faithful

v. B.

BERLIN, Tuesday.
(Not dated.)

MY LOVE,—Hearty thanks for your letter received yesterday—to you for the writing, and to God for the contents: that you are all well. I am well, too, and plough bravely through dinners, balls, and shooting parties; yesterday I danced at the Frenchman's, even waltzed with Malle, in childish fashion; meanwhile, all manner of annoyance about Neuenburg; some of the Royalists who were taken prisoners are here, tormenting the King inconceivably to give up Prussia rather than Neuenburg, and behaving as though they had been of immeasurable service, while in reality they are about on a par with a man who wishes to oblige some one with a light for his cigar, and in so doing sets fire to the house; in such a case I should only make modest demands for gratitude for the devotion I had shown, the result being so unpleasant. In the end we shall be exposed to ridicule for not having decided quickly enough to do what must be done. . . .

Meyerbeer is just composing above me, he plays ten or twelve bars of sickly, raging music, repeating them with alterations of a few notes, then silence, then again other themes, often ten times over before he is satisfied. Many people send you regards. I drove to Potsdam recently with Marie Stolberg. She was very charming, and invited me to dine with her, but I could not. I am all Chamber; the quarrel with the Ministry about the new taxes is serious—Moritz in advance with Gerlach, in the breach against the government. . . .

BILL MARIE VON BISMARCK HERBERT

April, 1856

Farewell, my dear heart. Greetings to the children and Pauline, also Oertzen. God be with you.

Your most faithful

v. B.

Hôtel de Douvres,
Paris, *April* 6, '57.

I reached here safely yesterday, my love, having arrived in the town soon after five o'clock. Paris was half awake and half asleep; the latter was the case at the hotel, where a porter, clothed only in a beard and a shirt, seemed the solitary wakeful creature. All the cafés on the Boulevards were just closing, so that we had to wander about from half-past five till half-past seven without being able to get a cup of coffee in the whole huge city of Paris. Boots, toys, parasols, or clocks could be had at six o'clock, but no breakfast. We had to content ourselves by going to bed without it, sleeping until eleven o'clock—but we made up for it after that! . . . The weather is very mild and rather damp; it is so warm that I went about all day in my riding coat, in which I felt almost too warm, which made me discover that pretty green neckties easily lose their colour. . . .

Your most faithful

v. B.

Paris, *April* 9, '57.

My beloved Heart,—To be sure, I have nothing to add to my sheet of yesterday, but I think you will receive these lines the day after to-morrow, or at earliest to-morrow before going to bed, and so, as the latter may be the case, I will wish you not only a good-night, with angels to guard you, but, besides that, God's richest blessing on your birthday, for next year and in the future. May He

keep sorrow and sickness from you, give the children health, let me be very seldom sulky or absent, and reward you richly for all the love and devotion you have shown me. I cannot procure the blue-throated warbler here, it is true, but I bring back to you a heart full of thanks and love for God our Lord, and for you, my love, as a birthday present. I can only pray that things may remain as unchangeable as hitherto, for a long, long time.

Yesterday I saw a good deal of Hatzfeld, paid a very long visit to Walewsky, and to a remarkable old lady—remarkable for her amiability—the old Grand-Duchess Stèphanie, who is very gracious to me. . . . Last evening I was at the opera, the ballet very fine, many pretty people; but ballets always bore me. To-morrow I shall hear a German sermon; to-day is the important day for the Catholics, to-morrow for us.

We will celebrate your birthday next week, the day after my return. God be with you, my heart. Love to the children. What shall I bring for Pauline?

Your most faithful

V. B.

PARIS, *April* 11, '57.

MY BELOVED HEART,—I must at least tell you, on your birthday, that I am with you in my thoughts, and that I have drunk your health to-day in good iced champagne at the Trois Frères Provençaux, a very fine restaurant in the Palais Royal. Then I went to the theatre and saw a witty play, and afterwards Rosenberg, Werther, W. Loe, and two Russians came to see me, and drank soda-water; now I am going to bed, and shall dream of you if I can.

12th.

I have been dreaming all night of dead and sick birds, a lark with blue feathers that I shot, and a crow which I

wanted to hold by the tail, but he left it in my hand, and of others, besides. You can see from this that your bad luck with the blue-throated warbler has been in my mind all day long. I have already looked for one here, but it seems to be quite unknown; there are blue-throated birds, to be sure, but screechers from across the water. . . . Farewell, my darling, and give love to the children. God protect you all.

Your most faithful

v. B.

PARIS, 17, Friday.

MY HEART,— . . . I was delighted to receive your long letter just now, and to see that the children are well. . . . Yesterday, at the Emperor's dinner, I had the most charming neighbour, the Empress; truly an extraordinary woman, not only outwardly. . . . Farewell, my angel. God keep you well. Tuesday or Wednesday, God willing, I shall be with you.

Your most faithful

v. B.

COPENHAGEN, *August* 6, '57.

MY HEART,—I arrived here safely this morning at seven, after a very pleasant journey; soft air, red moon, chalk cliffs, lighted by burning tar-barrels, two storms at sea, a pretty Swedish girl, and some wind—what more does one need? Only the beauty of the night kept me from going to bed, and when, at two o'clock, the rain drove me from the deck, it was so hot and stuffy and crowded below that I went up again at three, with coat and cigar. Now I have taken a sea-bath, breakfasted on

lobster, and must go to court at half-past one, though I should like to sleep two hours more. Much love to all dear ones.

Your

v. B.

NÄSBYHOLM, *August* 9, '57.

MY DARLING,—You will have received my letter, written immediately after my arrival in Copenhagen. After writing I was very busy for two days with museums and politics. Yesterday I crossed over to Malmö, and drove about forty miles in a north-easterly direction, and now I find myself at this place, the guest of Baron Blixen, in a white castle, high up on a peninsula surrounded by a big lake. From the window I look into dense ash-foliage, through which one catches a glimpse of the water and the hills on the other side; the sun is shining, flies are buzzing, the Prince of Hesse is sitting behind me, half-reading, half-dozing, under the window somebody is talking broad Swedish, and from the kitchen below comes the saw-like sound of a grater. This is all I can write to you about at present. Yesterday we went buck-shooting—killed one; I didn't shoot, got soaked through, then had mulled wine, and slept soundly nine hours. Roebuck are stronger here than anywhere that I have ever seen them, and this region is far more beautiful than I had imagined. Magnificent beech forests, hilly, and walnut-trees as thick as a man in the garden. We have just been to see the pheasant-preserve. After dinner we go out on the lake; perhaps we may shoot a duck, if we are not afraid of disturbing the Sabbath stillness of this beautiful solitude by a report; to-morrow there will be a grand hunt; next day return to Copenhagen, and from thence to Gr. Plessen at Lindholm, near Roeskilde, Zealand Isle for deer-stalking on Wednesday. Thursday, *viâ* Copenhagen to Helsingborg, about

one hundred miles into Sweden; black-cock and grouse in desolate wastes, lodgings in peasants' huts, kitchen and provisions to be taken with us. This will last about a week, and I don't know yet what I shall do then. . . . May the Lord keep you all, and grant us a joyful reunion.

Your most faithful

VON B.

COPENHAGEN, *August* 11, '57.

I have just come back from Sweden, and had been rejoicing all the way that I should find news from you here, but not even a line, although the mail comes daily. I conclude from this not only that you are well, but also that your time is pleasantly occupied. . . .

COPENHAGEN, 13*th*.

For two days I have been hunting in the most charming region of water and woods that it is possible to imagine. In two hours I leave for Helsingborg, and thence go farther on into Sweden. God continue to guard you and our dear parents.

Your most faithful

V. B.

TOMSJÖNÄS, *August* 16, '57.

MY DEAREST,—Again I utilise the Sunday quiet to give you a sign of life, though I do not know when I shall have a chance of sending it out of this wilderness to the post. I drove about seventy miles without a break, through the desolate forest, in order to arrive here, and before me lie

over a hundred miles more before we get to provinces of arable land. Not a town, not a village, far and wide; only solitary settlers living in wooden huts, with a little barley and potatoes, who find rods of land to till, here and there, between dead trees, pieces of rock, and bushes. Picture to yourself about five hundred square miles of such desolate country as that around Viartlum, high heather, varied by short grass and bog, and with birches, junipers, pines, beeches, oaks, alders, here impenetrably thick, there thin and barren of foliage, the whole strewn with innumerable stones of all sizes up to that of a house, smelling of wild rosemary and rosin; at intervals wonderfully shaped lakes surrounded by woods and heather-clad hills, then you have the land of Smaa, where I am just now. Really, the land of my dreams, inaccessible to despatches, colleagues, and Reitzenstein, but, unfortunately, to you as well. I should so like to have a hunting-castle on one of these quiet lakes, and live here for some months with all the dear ones whom I think of now as assembled at Reinfeld. In winter, to be sure, it would not be endurable here, especially in the mud that all the rain would make. Yesterday we turned out at about five, tramped, in burning heat, up-hill and down, through bush and fen, until eleven, and found absolutely nothing; walking through bogs and impenetrable juniper thickets, on large stones and timbers, is very fatiguing. Then we slept in a hay-shed until two o'clock, drank lots of milk, and walked again until sunset, bringing down twenty-five black-cock and two grouse. I shot four of the former; Engel, to his great delight, one of the latter. Then we dined in the hunting-lodge, a wonderful wooden building on a peninsula in the lake. My sleeping-room and its three chairs, two tables, and bedstead are of unvarnished pine-boards, like the whole house, the walls being also made of these. There is no sofa; bed very hard; but after such rough work as ours one sleeps without rocking. From my window I see a hill covered with brilliantly tinted heather, on it birches rocking in the wind, and between them, mirrored in the lake, pine-

woods on the other side. Near the house a camp has been put up for hunters, drivers, servants, and peasants, then a barricade of waggons, the kennels, eighteen or twenty huts which form a lane on both sides; from each a dog looks out, tired from yesterday's hunt. . . .

17*th.*

Six wolves were here this morning, and tore a poor ox to pieces; we found their fresh tracks, but did not catch sight of them. We have been on the march from 4 A.M. to 8 P.M., shot four more black-cock, slept two hours on mown heather, now dead tired and to bed.

19*th.*

There is no possibility of getting a letter off from here without sending a messenger sixty miles to the post-office, so I shall take this to the coast to-morrow myself. I fell yesterday just as the dog pointed, as I was looking more at him than at the ground, and hurt my left shin-bone. Yesterday we had uncommonly tiring sport, far away and rocky, and, though it brought me in a young black-cock, it pulled me down to such an extent that to-day I am staying in the house putting on wet compresses that I may be fit for travelling to-morrow, and for shooting the day after. I am proud of myself for having stayed behind alone in this delightful weather, and can hardly help hoping, with shameful jealousy, that the others will not shoot anything either. It is a little too late in the year; the birds are shy, or the game would be much more plentiful. We had charming surroundings yesterday, . . . all just as God made it—forest, rock, heath, bog, lake. I may yet emigrate to this place some day. . . . I have amused myself all day trying to learn Danish from the doctor who makes my compresses. We brought him with us from Copenhagen. There are none here. Since the report that a doctor is present has spread through the woods, from twenty to

thirty of the hut people have been streaming in here daily to get his advice. Sunday evening we gave a very jolly dance affair for the peasants who live within the twenty-five square miles of the shooting in the forest; and the music was alternately sung and played. There they heard of the learned man, and now people who have been hopelessly crippled for twenty years come hoping for help from him, as savages do from a magician.

GUNARSTORP, *August* 21.

Yesterday we made the journey out of the forest, and to-day here, about fifteen miles from Helsingborg, have shot a little and dined. I couldn't walk because of my leg, so I followed the chase on horseback. In spite of this impediment, I was the only one who succeeded in bringing down a black-cock; there are many here, but already too shy; they don't stay near. It is incredible with what surefootedness my horse climbed over stones and broke through thickets; no sporting dog could do better. It was as though I had four legs which I was moving myself; unfortunately he is not for sale, or I should buy him for you. . . . The climate here is much milder than I expected. Fine fruit and walnut trees, glorious old beech forests, at whose edge stands the house with its gables and towers, overlooking a fine expanse of wheat towards the other side; under my window a French garden, with old hedges of box and beech. The revolution seems to have passed over this strange land without leaving a trace, while in Denmark it has turned everything topsy-turvy. In Sweden everything gives one an impression of military discipline, more so than at home thirty years ago, almost as before 1806. . . .

Now fare well, very well, my heart. God keep you, and all our family.

Your most faithful

V. B.

MEMEL, *August* 29, '57.

MY DARLING,—To be sure, I cannot tell you much that is new since my Berlin letter of the day before yesterday, but still I can give you the news that I have arrived here safely, and am casting loving glances towards you over the sea; if the latter were not round, and my eyes were better, and the weather clearer, perhaps I could catch a glimpse of you, at this sunset hour, on the mole at Stolpmünde; there are no mountains between us at any rate, for I hardly believe that the rocks of Wertenhagen, near the Freiche, extend as far as the straight line between here and the extreme point of the mole. From Natel to Dirschau, my thoughts were centred on Reinfeld, and at Elbing I saw, not Hohendorf, to be sure, but still the Drausen Lake and something of Schlobitten. I again found no letter from you at Königsberg, and have left instructions that it is to be forwarded to Polangen when it arrives. Beyond this good and inexpensive inn, "The German House," I have seen little of the town of pure reason; this morning I went through pine-woods devastated by caterpillars, past the Wagners' future residence, to Kranz, and thence alone with Engel on a steamer which took me across the tedious harbour in about eight hours. When we were about half-way, near Schwarzort, two boatloads of ladies, half the *élite* of Memel, from the watering-place, came to meet us, and were received with delight by the other half, the consequence was that I found myself surrounded by all the pretty girls of the town, who were only escorted by three men, the dogs of this flock of lambs. It was really an agreeable sight after this boring harbour. I had hoped to reach Polangen to-day, a journey of about three hours; but the dear Russia is closed in the evening at eight o'clock, and even though the portals might perhaps be opened with a silver key, probably the accommodation with a Jew there would be worse than the

wretched inn which, under the name of the "British Hotel," ranks first amongst two, and looks as if there might be bugs, although it was burnt down three years ago.

Your most faithful

v. B.

KÖNIGSBERG, *September* 12, '57.

MY DEAREST,—I was delighted to find your four letters at Polangen (which, by the way, is not in Prussia, but in Russia), and to learn that things have gone well with you and the children. It seems that, up to the 8th, you had not yet received any letters from me; I don't understand this, particularly in the case of the first, for I posted it in Polangen on August 29; the other two might reasonably be still on the way. I have been prospering; the Finland folk all showed me touching kindness, such as one rarely meets with as a stranger in any other country. Besides many roebuck and fallow-deer, I slaughtered five elks, among them a very strong buck, which stood six feet eight inches high, not counting its colossal head, the latter probably nine or ten feet high in the air. He fell like a hare, but, as he was still alive, I put another shot into him out of pity; I had hardly done this when another, and probably bigger one, came running by, so near me that Engel, who was loading, sprang behind a tree to avoid being thrown down; but I had to content myself with looking at him in friendly fashion, as I had no more shots. I can't get over my vexation at this, and have to work off some of it to you. I wounded one, besides, which they will probably find yet, and one I missed altogether. So I might have shot eight head of game. The evening before last we left Dondangen, and covered the distance of about one hundred miles back to Memel, without a road, through woods and wastes, in twenty-nine

hours, in an open carriage, over stock and stone, so that it was necessary to hang on to keep from tumbling out. We came here early this morning by the steamer, after three hours' sleep in Memel, and leave here for Berlin this evening, arriving there to-morrow evening. "We" refers to Behr and myself. I can't stop at Hohendorf; I ought to have been in Berlin by to-day, according to my furlough; but then I should have had to give up the best shooting in Dondangen, with the big deer, or "bollen," as they call them there, and I should not have seen the axle of a rustic waggon break under the big beast's weight. The Emperor comes to Berlin on Monday, and I ought to be there first, and was to have been on the spot "several days" in advance! . . . Well, farewell, my angel. I must write some other letters; give much love to our parents and children, and tell the latter that their letters gave me a great deal of pleasure.

Your most faithful

v. B.

BERLIN, Tuesday (not dated). [*April*, '58.]

I count on being able to leave to-morrow morning, thus reaching you, my heart, to-morrow evening, where it will be nicer than here, in spite of there being no curtains. Here everybody is intriguing against everybody else, and every one is hoping I shall put my eggs into his nest. The result is that I hardly get any rest at night, and yet make no progress in regular business matters. This evening I shall spend at the Princess's; then to bed late and up early. I shall sink very wearily into your arms. . . . The news about old Schreck * is very sad; the light of his mind is going out, and it is hoped that the increasing weakness will soon put an end to it all. Yet, if it is God's will, He can turn all this human anxiety to folly, and make the

* General von Schreckenstein.

glorious brown eyes clear again. Every one feels for him here; the journey to England, which the old gentleman undertook against his will from a sense of duty, used up his last remaining powers. . . . Last evening I was at Eb. Stolberg's. She sends you cordial regards.

Your most faithful

v. B.

FRANKFORT, *August* 1, '58.

DEAR MOTHER,—Both your dear letters have given me great pleasure in my loneliness; every sign of life from the dear ones who belong to me fills in a measure the emptiness that surrounds me, and of which I was especially sensible last evening, when your letter of the 26th came. I had accompanied the Prince of Prussia as far as Rudesheim; from there Princess Carl took me with her to Schlangenbad. . . . Then I was in Wiesbaden for several hours, on business with the King of Holland, and arrived in my quiet house just with the sunset glow, which lay very beautifully on the Taunus, but was somehow not conducive to a cheerful mood. After making myself some tea and eating two cold chickens, I slept till ten this morning, for I had not had a real rest for several nights. A letter from Johanna this morning gives me fairly good news. I have some faint hope of getting three weeks to myself from the 12th; then I will come at once, though I have just received a very tempting invitation to shoot in Sweden. But I will be a model paterfamilias and refuse it. Heartiest greetings to my dear little father, to whom I am deeply grateful for all the care he has bestowed on the plantations. God will bless his efforts for the children, and in their old age they will enjoy the fruits thereof. . . . Farewell.

Your faithful son,

v. B.

BERLIN, *January* 15, '59.

MY DEAR HEART,—I sent word yesterday through Engel of my well-being, as it was not possible for me to get to my desk. . . . Do you know that Carl Canitz is engaged?—to a young Englishwoman! More than that is not known about her here. She will have a hard time with such a confirmed bachelor. Pourtalès is actually nominated for Vienna. O. Usedom* is still fighting for Frankfort, but without prospect of success. She will probably go to Brussels, Savigny perhaps to Munich, Goltz to Constantinople. They are kinder to me at court than ever, more especially the Prince, but the Princess also. The Ministers are in an uncomfortable position; the Prince is urging them to the right; their professed friends in the Chamber are dragging them to the left, and, to be sure, one can only go one way at a time. I still think I shall be back on Thursday, though the Prince expressed the hope that I would be able to stay longer. As yet I have no letter from you. Love to the children and Jenny.

Your most faithful

V. B.

Your letter has just come; many thanks.

BERLIN, *March* 7, '59.

MY DEAREST AND BEST,—I have arrived here safely—Hôtel Royal. I couldn't say a real good-bye to you yesterday in the crowd of people, or to the children, either. I left with a feeling of dissatisfaction because of

* Countess Olympia Usedom.

this, and the weather was depressingly dismal. My last good look was at the Beckers; as I could find no card, I threw them a pencil in token of a last greeting, and I fear it went into somebody's face. In spite of the dim light, Bockenheim and the country about Vilbel never seemed so beautiful to me as at my departure. At Butzbach it became dark inside and out. To-day a cold, glistening sun is shining, with wind and dust—true diplomats' weather! . . . I am well, but full of grievous longing for you. Give my love to the children, and kiss them for me, and many kind greetings to the Beckers. With all the wishes for blessings upon you that a human heart can desire.

Your most faithful

v. B.

Be sure to rest well at night.

BERLIN, *March* 9, '59.

MY DEAREST HEART,—Many thanks for your letters, which came yesterday and to-day; I can only tell you, in few words, that I am well, and shall be glad if I can start in a week; it is hardly likely to be sooner. . . . I shall not be able to take Putsch to Petersburg, since Werther tells me I could not employ more than two servants who speak no Russian. Do not tell him so definitely, but prepare him for it. Werther's wife is tearful at having had to leave Petersburg. He thinks the salary enough to live on, though I consider everything he tells me about horribly dear; he has, however, saved something.

I must go. God's blessing be with you and all of us. Loving greetings to children, Jenny, Beckers, Gayette.

Your faithful

v. B.

Snow and sunshine alternate here.

BERLIN, *March* 17, '59.

MY BELOVED HEART,—I am still here, to my great annoyance, and am utterly at a loss what to do, or how to answer the eternally repeated questions about my departure. I had fixed on Saturday as my last day, and yesterday I was told that a letter from the Prince to the Czar, which I must take, will not be ready till the beginning of next week. Yesterday, while still in bed, I had callers, one follows another, so that for more than two hours I could not rise and dress. I wanted to write to you yesterday and the day before, but was besieged, so that each time I had to drive the last caller away forcibly, so as to attend to my own affairs before dinner. The day before yesterday dinner with Schleinitz; yesterday with Prince Carl; to-day with Budberg. I am utterly disgusted with this useless killing of time, which leaves one hardly time to breathe. The parcel with travelling comforts reached me to-day. Saturday or Sunday I shall go to Schönhausen, probably with Malle. What Olympia* says of her is nonsense; she has hardly seen her all winter. Malle has been at Kissingen for three months of the winter, and it has done her much good; she is somewhat stouter, and very cheerful. Speak very guardedly to Olympia; she will have tales to tell even if you do not open your mouth. . . . Farewell, my sweetheart. I cannot start before Tuesday. Hearty love. God's mercy guard you all.

v. B.

Won't the children's bad teeth be replaced by others; if so, why have they to be stopped?

* Countess Usedom.

BERLIN, *March* 22, '59.

MY DEAR HEART,—Just what I predicted has happened. After being made to wait here sixteen days needlessly I was informed yesterday evening at five that I must start in a hurry, this evening at latest! That I shall not do, but I shall leave to-morrow (Wednesday) evening, and even by that time I shall have difficulty in getting through with all farewell visits. Your complaint that I do not treat you well in the matter of letters betrays true feminine injustice; I wrote on Friday and on Monday, and made Klüber write on Sunday. If I had wanted to write between times, I should have had to do so from a Genthin or Potsdam railway carriage. If you could only see how things go with me here, you would simply admire me for writing at all. I neither believe nor wish that we are to stay only a year in Petersburg; and if it were so, it comes to the same thing whether we are saddled with our own things or Werther's in the end; it depends entirely upon which can be arranged most cheaply for our use there. Hearty greetings to children, Jenny and the Beckers and Gayette and the Eisendeckers, &c. A week from to-day, God willing, I shall be skating on the Neva. Bücking, who has just been in to see me, says he would send me to Petersburg in any case for my health, if I were not going there.

Your most faithful

v. B.

KÖNIGSBERG, *March* 24, '59.

MY DEAR HEART,—I arrived here two hours ago, and the diligence is already at the door—one large four-horse affair, and one baggage-waggon with two horses. To-

morrow at noon I expect to be in Kowno. We are both hale and hearty, and send best greetings. Much love to the children, Jenny, and all friends. Klüber is a bit old-maidish; he must get married. May he make as happy a choice as your most faithful husband! I should not grudge it him.

Kowno, *March* 25, '59.

My Love,—Snowstorms all the way from Königsberg here, six inches deep; everything white; 36° to 47°; ice. Drove one hundred and forty-nine miles in twenty-eight hours, with post-horses—these are just as bad in Russia as in Prussia; crossed the Niemen at night in beautiful clear winter weather; an ancient city, steep river banks, prettily lighted up by stars and snow and window-lights; black, rushing water, broad as the Elbe. Russians very amiable, but post-horses bad, and often none to be had. We shall sleep here four hours, then on to Düna. Good-night, with love.

Your most faithful

v. B.

Pskov, *March* 28, '59.

My dear Heart,—Russia has stretched out under our wheels; the versts increased in number at every station, but at last we are in the haven of the railway. Drove ninety-six hours from Königsberg without stopping, at Kowno only we slept four hours, and three at Egypt (a station near Dünaburg)—I think it was the day before yesterday. I feel very well now, but my skin burns, for I sat outside almost all the way, and the temperature was from two to twenty-four degrees below freezing-point. In the coach

there was not room for Klüber and me, so I changed places with Engel. We had snow so deep that, with six and eight horses, we were literally stuck, and had to get out. The slippery mountains were still worse, especially going down; we took an hour doing twenty paces, because the horses fell four times and eight times got entangled in the harness; added to that night and wind, a real winter journey. The coach was too heavy. Klüber had about four hundred pounds of things; for one it would hardly have been comfortable; for two it was torture. It was impossible to sleep in my seat outside, because of the cold, still it was better in the open air; the sleep I can make up. The Niemen was open; the Wilia, a river that you hardly know, but as broad as the Main and very rapid, was thick with ice. The Düna had only one clear spot, where, by dint of four hours' waiting and three hours' work, we got across. The whole region is something like old Pomerania, without villages, much as it is between Bütow and Berent; some good forests, but the majority like the New Kolziglow pines. Plenty of birch-forests, miles of marshes; road straight as an arrow; every fourteen to twenty-two versts a post-station like Horuskrug, all well arranged, everything to be had, and all heated; everybody very polite, and service prompt; but on the other side of Dünaburg there were not horses enough; waited at the station near Kowno three hours, and then—tired beasts. Where the road was good they travelled splendidly, running miles at a time with the big, heavy coach; but they cannot pull where the road is hard, however much the postilions urge. The sons of the soil please me altogether, judging from first appearances. It is now six; we have just dined; opposite me (I am writing on the tablecloth) sits Klüber, who is smoking pensively. At 7.45 the train leaves, two versts away. To-morrow morning, at 4.15 (seven days after starting), if it is God's gracious will, I shall be in Petersburg. . . . God bless you and children. Give each one love and kisses. My head is buzzing a little. For miles around I see sheets of snow, birches, the sunset—beautiful clear

winter weather. To-morrow I shall sleep all day long. Farewell.

Your most faithful

v. B.

Forgive this confused letter, but I have been out of bed for five nights, and this is the sixth.

PETERSBURG, *March* 29, '59.

MY DEAR HEART,—I have arrived here safely, with God's help, staying for the present at the "Hôtel Demuth," and I have suddenly grown twelve days younger, for the date here is the 17th. Through incorrect translation into Russian of my Pskov telegram, it failed of its purpose; and this morning early at five, after I had left Engel and the conductor with our coach and baggage, I found myself face to face with the driver and the hostler of the hotel, and thrown upon the Russian that I had managed to learn *en route*. My magic formula, "*Pruski paslannik*," extracted only the reply that he did not live there; but when I said, "*Jassam*" ("I myself am he") the Russian became wide-awake, and ran to get various people with barbarous names; but even they spoke none of the Western languages. In spite of all I am tolerably comfortable here now, and although the "German waiter" is ill, I was able to wash, breakfast, and drive to the legation. You see I have travelled continually from Wednesday evening until this morning (Tuesday). In summer they tell me it is a trip of sixty hours to Königsberg, but now it takes a hundred and eight. I have come out of it splendidly. The railway carriages are much better than ours, and heated. I slept eight hours as if I were in bed, and now need no more rest. When you write to me, bear in mind that all foreign letters are opened, and that this is generally known. So don't scoff at anything, for it is taken for

granted that what is written by post is intended for the government. A traveller will take these lines with him; nobody knows how long they will be stuck in the snow; do not be anxious and impatient if you are a long time without news. It's thawing here to-day, but very little. My head is still full of post-houses and verst-posts, and the ringing of the horses' bells, the shouting of the postilions, and the outrider's eternal "*Pravée—i verräter, skarrée, i, skarréeee—i!*" and the blinding snow and wind, and the blows on the poor horses that were so willing to gallop whenever the wheels would go round. A "*kareta potschtowaja*" it was called, and a ramshackle affair it was, a thing like a house, and packed so high that we brushed the highest turnpikes. With this monster the men drove with six and eight horses, two or three miles at a time, not only at a gallop, but at full speed; with us it is forbidden to drive rapidly down hill or over bridges, but in Russia the gallop seems to be prescribed in both cases, even where it is very steep and the horses have just fallen. But, after all, it was amusing—as long as I don't have to go through it again. Perhaps you would like it in summer—or wouldn't you? About every fifty miles the Czar has resting-quarters in a post-station, where everything is very comfortably arranged, and you would be allowed to use them as well as I.

Farewell, my angel. I must be off now to Gortchakoff. Love to the children.

Your very loving

v. B.

PETERSBURG, *April* 1, '59.

MY DEAR HEART,—How nice it was to be awakened this morning by the letter from you and the children! For half-an-hour I managed to forget that fifteen hundred miles lie between us.

4th.

I wrote these few lines on my birthday; then business interfered. It is singular that I have taken up my office just on the first of April, for I had my first audience with the Czar on that day, and his amiable manner made it really a kind of birthday present. I drank your health with a bottle of Rhine wine, besides one of champagne, with Klüber, and all for seven roubles; but we enjoyed it immensely. I wanted to write you a long letter, my beloved, and now I must scribble in great haste; yet there is no one I want so much to write to. On April 1 (13th) I shall have another birthday here, just coinciding with your dear one. The Neva stands like granite, and bears loaded carts, and street-lamps stand on the ice at the crossings. Kiss the children for me. Be always my dearest. God be with you.

Your most faithful

v. B.

PETERSBURG, *April* 4, '59.

MY DEAR HEART,—Now that the rush of the morning letters is over, I sit down in the evening to write you a few more lines in peace. When I closed my letter to-day I did so with the intention of writing to you next a birthday letter, and thought I had plenty of time for it; it is only the 23rd of March here. Now I have thought it over, and find that a letter must go out to-day so as to reach Frankfort on the 11th; it is difficult to get used to the seven days' interval which the post demands. So I hurry my congratulations. May God grant you His rich blessing in soul and body, for all your love and devotion, and may He give you resignation to and contentment with those various new conditions of life, which are contrary to your inclinations, and which

you will meet here. We cannot get rid of the sixtieth degree of latitude, and we have not chosen our own lot. Many live happily here, although the ice is still as solid as a rock, and more snow fell in the night, and there is no garden and no Taunus.

I should be very well pleased here if only I knew that you could be the same, and, above all, if I had you with me. All official matters—and in them really rests the vocation which has fallen to my lot, and which you, by your significant "Yes" in the Kolziglow church, are bound to share in joy and sorrow—all official matters are, in comparison with Frankfort, changed from thorns to roses; whether they will always blossom is, indeed, uncertain. The aggravations of the Diet and the ministerial venom seem mere childishness from here. If we do not wantonly make ourselves disagreeable, we are welcome everywhere. Whenever the carriages are called, and "*Prusku passlannika*" ("Prussian carriage") is cried out among those waiting, all the Russians look about with pleasant smiles, as though they had just drunk off a ninety-degree glass of schnapps. There is some social gathering every evening, the people very different from those in Frankfort. Your aversion to court life will also diminish. You cannot fail to like the Czar; you have seen him already—have you not? He is extremely gracious to me, so is the Czarina—the young Czarina, I mean. And it is easy to get on with the Dowager, in spite of her imposing presence. I dined with her to-day with the Meiendorfs and Loen,* and it was just like that dinner at our house with Prince Carl and the Princess Anna, when we enjoyed ourselves so much. In short, only take courage, and things will turn out all right. So far I have only agreeable impressions; the only thing that provokes me is that smoking is not allowed in the street. One can have no idea in what disfavour the Austrians are over here; a mangy dog will not take a piece of meat from them. I am sorry for poor Szechenyi; I do not dislike him. They will either drive

* Military *chargé d'affaires.*

things to a war from here, or let it come, and then they will stick the bayonet into the Austrians' backs; however peacefully people talk, and however much I try to soften things down, as my duty demands, the hatred is unlimited, and exceeds all my expectations. Since coming here I begin to believe in war. There seems to be no room in Russian politics for any other thought but how to strike at Austria. Even the mild, quiet Czar becomes angry and excited whenever he talks about it, and so does the Czarina, although a Darmstadt Princess; and it is touching to hear the Dowager Czarina talk of her husband's broken heart, and of Francis Joseph, whom he loved as a son, quite without anger, but as if speaking of one who is exposed to God's vengeance. I have still much to write for the courier to-morrow, and you will not receive this, I suppose, until two days after your dear birthday, just when I am celebrating mine by the calendar here. Farewell, my dear, and give each child an orange from me. Love to all.

Your most faithful

v. B.

PETERSBURG, *April* 8, '59.

DEAR PARENTS,—The loss of the letter was an advantage to me, for by its means I had the pleasure of seeing the Zuckers post-mark two days in succession; the lost one came to-day, the other yesterday. The tokens of your love cannot tell me anything which is not already part of my flesh and blood. And yet I always gain fresh delight from them, and the home-note they strike is doubly refreshing here amid the strange din of a foreign land. I heartily thank God and you for the love and devotion which I know is in your hearts, and of which I feel secure until our earthly end, and, if God wills, beyond. I have good news of Johanna and the children—one letter on the 1st, and once since, written on the 1st. I lack nothing here, except her presence — and I shall be able to endure

God's long winter; yet consumptive Laplanders come here to seek health in the milder climate. I left Berlin on Wednesday evening, and reached here early on Tuesday; the first and the last night (from Pskov) by railway, but in the interval I only slept for six or seven hours on the seats of the coach. Sometimes the snow was deep as sand-dunes, and sometimes there was none at all. At many stations there were no horses, as the coaches needed twice or three times as many as usual; crossing half-frozen rivers at night; slippery, steep mountains, where the horses were worn out going up, and kept falling on the way down. You would not have liked it, dear mother, when the horses, eight in number, after lying in a heap one upon another, had hardly been re-harnessed, before they went tearing at full gallop down the mountain into the night, with the top-heavy coach. Now and then we walked, because the coach stuck fast in the snowdrifts. And so it took us the entire time from Thursday afternoon to Monday evening to travel about five hundred miles, from Königsberg to Pskov, without stopping anywhere for the night. At Pskov we changed into an exceedingly well-appointed railway carriage, in which I slept nine hours without stirring, and was wakened with difficulty at this station early on Tuesday. I am very glad to have taken this trip; I shall hardly repeat the experience, for the rapid progress of the railway yearly minimises the stretch of road without rails. . . .

The weather has been changeable since I came, with moderate temperature, hovering between clear frost, snow, and mud; the Neva is still frozen, though it seems closed to carriage traffic to-day; at any rate, I saw only foot-passengers on the ice. I want to thank you, my dear father, for kindly thinking of my fondness for rearing forest trees. May our grandchildren find God's blessing in their shade. Johanna writes very dear letters constantly; to-day one of Herbert's came with hers. God be praised that they are all well, and may He, dear parents, grant like health to you. Somewhere about Midsummer's Day

I shall probably take Johanna away from you, if it be God's will.

With hearty love, the true son of you both,

v. B.

PETERSBURG, *April* 19, '59.

Your description of spring colours and sounds has made me very homesick; I have been feeling melancholy all day, and I have just taken a good look again at the Neva ice before sunset, to see whether it will not be kind enough to go soon; it is already greyish-black, which they say is a good sign. But the sea of houses, the stony ice will not melt! I have seen only stone and ice for three weeks, either the city has no gates, or they are inaccessible. This is another reason for my preference for the Stenbock house, which stands close to the large Neva bridge leading to the islands. I felt quite melancholy when I saw from thence something like forests or hills glistening on the horizon far over the water. I have not seen God's earth since Kobbelbude, the last station before Königsberg; there it began to snow on the 24th of March. I drive out to pay visits every day, and still do not get through them, in this city of many miles. I shall never learn my way about, looking out of the closed coupé; the houses have no numbers, and I cannot find any of my acquaintances again without a coachman. Then the order is, "Demidoff's house, on the Nevski Prospekt," but Nevski has certainly two hundred houses; and the puzzle is to pick out Demidoff's! My best guides are the shopkeepers' signs, especially those Russian characters, under which one is touched to decipher the names Schulze, Müller, and Schmidt! To-day also I discovered Jäger, and your mother's friend Hanoschke, really Ganoschke, for there is no H. at all. Just respectable citizens of Berlin masquerading in the frizzled beard of the Muscovite hieroglyphs. This week, much to

my delight, visits cease, *on fait ses dévotions*, for piety is all the fashion, and no callers are received. About dinner-time I am glad to rest half-an-hour from boredom at the Princess Obolenski's; she is so attractive that I ask for your indulgence if I do homage to her now and then; she goes to Moscow to-morrow. I have found many other charming women. A very pretty Frau von Korssakoff has already gone—she, too, to Moscow. Our politics put me out of humour; we are only driftwood, blown about by strange winds on our own waters, and what mean and ill-smelling winds they are, too! But how seldom people have any wills of their own in so estimable a nation as ours. We play the part of Leporello, and Austria that of Don Juan.

I have an idea that I advised you to sell the old bronze chandeliers; you had better not do so, if they are not already sold. My ideas about furnishing vary from day to day, according to whether I have just seen a millionaire's gilded saloons or an ordinary household. Yesterday, at the house of the Spanish Duke of Ossuna, I saw some bronzes beside which our poorest could hold their own; this metal seems to be very dear here. This grandee also showed us photographs of all sorts of fine castles and gardens which he owns in Spain, Italy, Belgium, and Sardinia, and which he himself knows only through the pictures. His income is in millions, he bears the greatest name in Spain, and lives here on the frozen Neva, lonely and unmarried, in a vast, rambling, furnished house, at a rent of twelve thousand Reichsthaler, and has no longing for the shade of his chestnut forests. . . .

April 20th.

The Neva is just breaking up. As usual, Gortch summoned me early this morning; after that I went to have a look. Thank Heaven! Farewell. I must hurry. I have had to write ciphers and telegrams for some hours. May everything dear and good be yours and the children's!

Your most faithful

V. B.

PETERSBURG, *April* 23, 1859.

MY DEAREST HEART,—A thousand thanks for your dear letters; the one dated the 14th arrived yesterday, the one of the 16th came just now. I will write to the children separately, if I have time. God be praised that you have all been well so far. I am so pestered with telegrams during this holy Easter week, that I am almost distracted; it is now eleven o'clock, and I have two deciphered ones from Berlin lying before me. At one o'clock I have to go to the Ministry, this I have to do at least once every day, after which I have more writing and deciphering. In March the English embassy here had a bill for telegrams of 4000 roubles, ours only amounted to about 300. . . . Ever since the day when the ice on the Neva broke up we have had pleasant spring weather; it is too warm for a coat in the sun, and riding it is baking; the whole town looks more cheerful, and the buds of the trees near the fortress have grown glossy, although there is no actual sign of green. Every one here is, if possible, more enraged with Austria than before, as clearly they desire war at any cost; the Emperor especially is seriously annoyed, and it seems as if war measures were already in preparation. Peace is desired here, because many internal affairs needing attention would be interrupted by war; if, however, the other side persist in war, then I believe the attitude towards Austria would be dangerous. An army is assembling at Kiew; but the most serious occurrences may arise, without Russia's co-operation, in connection with Turkey and Wallachia, when once the powder is lit.

It is time for the post, and to-morrow there is none, so a thousand farewells.

Your

V. B.

PETERSBURG, *April* 28, '59.

MY HEART,—I have been writing for three days and three nights, and never once to you! The courier is fumbling with his moustachios and sword in his impatience; but he must take two words to you, nevertheless. I am well, somewhat overworked. I have taken a house for a year, Stenbock, of which you have a drawing. . . . It is to be war, then (though not quite yet); Austria has granted two days more, but the troops are marching, and now perhaps they are already firing on each other. As God wills. To-day, with the Czar and a grand parade, we buried—or, rather, celebrated, the funeral rites of an old Prince Hohenlohe. I stayed with Gortchakoff in the church, with its black hangings, after everybody went out, and sat on the catafalque and velvet death's-head pall talking politics—really working, not just chatting. The preacher had referred to the psalm about the transitoriness of life (grass withered by the wind), and we planned and plotted as though one were never going to die. He is fumbling again. A thousand greetings, and good luck on your journey; if you don't start before the 4th, this will find you still in Frankfort. Kiss the children and all.

YOUR MOST FAITHFUL.

ZARSKOE-SELO, *May* 5, '59.

MY DEAR HEART,—I have wanted to write to you every day so as to greet you in Berlin; but again it is almost time for the courier to start; I dictate to Klüber from breakfast until four o'clock; then I take a walk; in the evening I do nothing more, because it tires my eyes; the

evening does not begin, however, until after nine; until then one can see without a light. With three cipher despatches coming in and three going out, we never pass a day without dictation. In short, I am glad to find this spare moment here in the Petersburg Potsdam, where I came for the reception in honour of the Dowager Czarina's name-day at eleven o'clock, to find that I am not needed until after twelve. I am sitting in a very stately room, with ladies' knick-knacks of the time of Alexander I.; before me a garden laid out in straight lines, with fine leafless lime trees, sunshine, and some beauty-patches of snow which fell freshly yesterday on the lawns. Klüber is walking to and fro behind me, unhappy over the wrinkling and riding-up of his lace-trimmed breeches. I am smoking cigarettes, and using all sorts of agate and bronze ornaments as ash-trays in my favourite way. Early this morning I received your last Frankfort letter, full of woe at parting from birds, flowers, and people. What is the use of peaking and pining? What must be, must be. To-morrow there is to be a big parade. I am told there will be sixty thousand men. I shall count them. The Emperor invited me unexpectedly to it, and I cannot decline, but I have no desire to play at being lieutenant again. The Prince himself said to me that I should at once be made a captain, and even a major, because he considered that it was necessary to be a soldier in order to see the Emperor to full advantage, but he has not kept his word; I can put up with it, since it is not our own service. I believe Edwin Manteuffel does not approve. If you wish to make sure of my existence, you will probably be able to do so at the Ministry any day, for it seldom happens that I do not telegraph there from one to four times. Now it is time for me to wash away this tobacco smell, for it will probably cling about my uniform. Her Majesty, the Dowager Czarina, does not like it at all, so I will do my best with eau de cologne and finish these lines in Petersburg. I shall probably not get back there before evening.

PETERSBURG, *May* 6, '59.

I did come earlier, after all, because I cut the Marshal's dinner, dined at Versen's (Elise Rauch's husband), a good and lively dinner, was at Mr. Pickens's, the American Ambassador, in the evening, a perfect Pickwick, exceedingly funny, but hardly amusing. This morning I wrote a letter to Alvensleben, then the review, about 40,000 men, Circassians, Georgians, Tartars, all sorts of strange people. The whole thing lasted nearly three hours, dust and cold wind, otherwise bright weather; the Czar devoted himself to me as exclusively as though he had got up the review for my benefit. As they marched past he took me forward to a place beside him, and explained to me every separate troop, where they were garrisoned and recruited, and who commanded them. . . . Farewell, my dear heart; I must dress. We are three hundred and ninety miles nearer to each other, anyway. To see the Neva, with its boat traffic, is a pleasure that I know the children will enjoy; it is under our window; the Stettin steamers moor there, too. Love to Oscar, Malle, children, and write how you feel about the life at court. . . . Kiss all the children, and give them oranges for me.

Your most faithful

v. B.

PETERSBURG, *May* 7, '59.

MY DEAR HEART,—In the courier-and-review hurry-scurry of yesterday I did not say a single word about how I enjoyed the children's picture, though it lay right before me; but it did not seem to occur to me that it was anything unusual; I felt as if I had had it for years. It is

splendid, and I must especially praise all three for keeping so still—the two older ones even with their eyes. Yesterday my head was so full of war and peace, Circassians, Cossacks, Tartars, grand duchesses, and chasseurs, that I could not collect my thoughts till to-day, after a good sleep. I dreamed in the night of short bedsteads painted white, with high legs. In free moments my thoughts are entirely taken up with your journey and with our house arrangements. . . . You must start from Reinfeld by Midsummer's Day at latest, for I should like to have you here by the 1st of August, so that the children may get acclimatised before the cold nights begin. It is difficult to employ more than one servant here who does not speak Russian. In the salons one hears hardly anything but French, but as soon as one sets foot outside the threshold one is in a flood of unknown sounds, and rarely finds anybody who understands a syllable of German, and still less of French.

Your most faithful

v. B.

PETERSBURG, *May* 14, '59.

MY BELOVED HEART,—Thank Heaven your letter of the 6th arrived yesterday; I had begun to feel anxious, since I could not find news of your arrival in Berlin in the *Kreuzzeitung*, and yet supposed that you had started on the 3rd. How sorry I am that you have had so much bother with the packing and sending things off, and with the donkeys who have added to your difficulties. You shall now have a thorough rest from all this and pick up again. . . . Please let me know at once whether, and if so in what form, my second telegram reached you three weeks ago—not the birthday one, but the following one, for which I had to pay eight roubles and divers kopecks, in order to tell you not to buy anything, consequently no carved furniture,

and now I see from your letter that I owe it entirely to your mother-wit that we have not acquired this *embarras de richesse!* Do send me the telegram in the original, if by any chance you have it at hand, so that I may give the telegraph clerks here a dressing, or recover my money. . . .

Your photograph was a very pleasant surprise; it is a bit strained, thinking of packing and visits, but still your dear face, not seen for three months. The one hundred and thirty calls were an excess of virtue.

Your most faithful

v. B.

I had something I wanted to add in closing, but in the flurry it has escaped me, and I cannot remember, except that I wanted to tell you something very nice.

PETERSBURG, Monday, *May* 16, '59.

. . . If, early this morning, you have really arrived at Schönhausen, I shall begin to have faith in dreams, for just before waking, somewhat late, I had quite a vivid dream, in which I saw you embrace a woman at Schönhausen, dressed in the costume of the place, in an impulsive and affectionate manner. . . . I already have my third coachman. The people drink so that one cannot trust one's own horses to them. They are exemplarily virtuous for thirteen days, and then one finds them on the fourteenth lying as if dead under the horses, head in the water-bucket, quite *hors de combat* for the rest of the day. . . . It is never dark now—a sunset sky even at midnight. To-day I came home early towards one, and the morning light was already quite rosy in the twilight streets. . . . It is fortunate that I have lots of work, always something to do, always in a hurry, writing, or seeing people, or hunting; otherwise the feeling of loneliness in this hotel would

have made me ill with yearning long ago. . . . Much love and God's blessing. By all means let the children go to Schönhausen.

Your most faithful

v. B.

PETERSBURG, *May* 28, '59.

MY DEAR HEART,— . . . The spring came on here like an explosion. A transformation from budding twigs to a thick green curtain in forty-eight hours. It is very hot now, with occasional storms, and I have no summer clothes with me, nor have I any beds or cooking utensils, and must move into Stenbock's, where both are lacking, in a fortnight. What could I buy in that line which would not be superfluous afterwards? Bedsteads I have, and a cook, too, but no cooking utensils, linen, or beds! I should have cried out before now about my need of these things, but where was my letter to find you? You woman without a date! The things will hardly reach me before July, as I have as yet received no notice from Rotterdam of their arrival there. Farewell. The boat will not wait. Much love, parents and children.

Your

v. B.

PETERSBURG, *May* 31, '59.
(No letter on June 1 either.)

MY DEAR HEART,—As the mail-boat has just come in without bringing a letter from you, I feel quite downcast, and shall be ill if you keep on forgetting me like this in my hot and lonely hotel room. During the whole month of May I have had two letters from you, the first from

Frankfort, just at the beginning, the other a long one, from Berlin on the 18th; and this boat brings everything that could leave Stettin up to the evening of the 28th. I do not even know whether you are in Berlin, or where, as your last letter contained nothing about plans for travelling or stopping, and I wanted so very, very much to follow you on your way with my thoughts, and to be able to write to you at definite places. I know very well that it is hard to find time to write when one is travelling, or when one is meeting old Pomeranian friends again, but surely I might be allowed a couple of lines during the week. Had I not written to you at all when I was in a hurry and rush, you would have had no letter from me since Berlin. Think how much it meant to you to receive a few hasty lines of news from me from any one of the stations on my way, and then consider how much lonelier and more in need of news I am here, as compared with you; you had the children and the Beckers and Arnims, and I don't know whom besides, while I sit the whole day at my desk, or with people who do not understand German, and from nine to eleven in the evening I ride, chiefly alone, rarely with Klüber. We seldom meet in the evening, unless I have dined with him. It is never dark now; one can read in the open air at eleven o'clock on the way to parties, and also on the way back through the still busy streets. I hardly ever go to bed before three, and then it is daylight. . . . The heat is oppressive—100° to 120° in the sun; I never get into the shade, as I live on the sunny side, and when I drive in an open droschky, I cannot look out for shade. Dust and great drought; everything pants for rain. Agreeable acquaintances are leaving, more and more. . . . Farewell, my beloved one. Love to all. And do not alarm me any longer with lack of news.

Your most faithful

v. B.

PETERSBURG, *June* 4, '59.

MY DEAR HEART,—At last the long-expected news from you came the day before yesterday, with the reassuring postmark, Stolp. I could not sleep at all in the evening, because I pictured accidents all along the route from Berlin to Reinfeld. . . . Yesterday I dined at the Dowager Czarina's at Zarske, where I found the Grand Duchess Marie, who could tell me at least that she had seen you in Berlin, and that you were all right. On the way back we met the Czar at the station, and he took me into his coupé—very conspicuous here for a civilian with such an old hat as I generally wear. In the evening I rode, of course, to the islands, on a lively dark-brown horse, and drank tea there with a nice, old, white-haired Countess Stroganoff. The lilac, I must tell you, has flowered here as beautifully as in Frankfort, and the laburnum, too; and the nightingales warble so merrily that it is hard to find a spot on the islands where one does not hear them. In the city, for some days, we have had such continuous heat as we seldom have at home. The captain of the *Eagle* told me that the temperature in Southern Pomerania was actually refreshing in comparison; with such short nights, too, the morning brings no real coolness, and I could ride or drive about for hours in the mysterious gloaming which hovers over the surface of the water at midnight, if the increasing brightness did not give warning that another day is waiting with its work and care, and that sleep demands its due rights beforehand. Since I have had the droschky, in which there is too little room for an interpreter, I am making progress in Russian, to the smirking delight of Dmitri, the coachman, as there is nothing left for me to do but to speak it *tant bien que mal*. I am sorry that you have not been able to watch the sudden awakening of Spring here with me; it seems as if it had suddenly occurred to her

that she had overslept herself, and she has accordingly arrayed herself in her green dress, from head to foot, in twenty-four hours. . . . All this preparation for war is somewhat premature, and is causing us unnecessary expense. I hope we shall come to our senses finally before setting all Europe on fire, for the sake of obliging some little princes, and helping Austria gloriously out of her embarrassment to our own cost. We cannot either allow Austria to be annihilated or, by a brilliant victory, to be strengthened in her feeling of self-confidence and to make us the footstool of her greatness. But there is plenty of time for either case to present itself before we take the plunge, and for many a piece of Lombard water to be dyed red, for things will not go forward so easily as hitherto, when the Austrians have once placed themselves in their line of forts, as they should have done at the first. . . .

It is a misfortune that I always write to you in a steaming hurry; now the foxy face of the Chancellory servant, who is also in the police pay, is before me again already, and is hurrying me up, and everything I wanted to say is shrivelling before the fellow, who is useful, however. I was just thinking of much more that I wanted to write, and now I do not know anything except that I should like to beat him, and that I send fond love to all.

Your most faithful

v. B.

Moscow, *June* 6, '59.

I want to send you some sign of life, at least, from here, my dear, while I am waiting for the samovar, and a young Russian in a red shirt is vainly struggling to light a fire; he blows and sighs, but it will not burn. After complaining so much before about the scorching heat, I woke up to-day between Twer and here, and thought I was dreaming when I saw the land and its fresh green covered far

and wide with snow. I am not surprised at anything any more, so when I could doubt the fact no longer, I turned quietly on my other side to continue sleeping and rolling about, although the play of the green and white colours in the morning red was not without charm. I do not know whether the snow still lies about Twer; here it has all melted, and a cool, grey rain is drizzling down on the green leads of the roofs. Russia certainly has a perfect right to claim green as her colour. Of the four hundred and fifty miles hither I slept away one hundred and eighty, but of the other two hundred and seventy every hand's-breadth was green, of all shades. I did not notice the towns and villages, or the houses, with the exception of the stations; bushy forests, chiefly birches, cover swamps and hills, a fine growth of grass under them, long meadows between. So it goes for fifty, one hundred, one hundred and fifty miles. I don't remember noticing any fields, or any heather or sand; lonely grazing cows or horses lead one to suppose there are people, too, in the neighbourhood. Moscow from above looks like a cornfield, the soldiers green, the furniture green, and I have no doubt that the eggs lying before me were laid by green hens. You will want to know how I happen to be here; I have asked myself the same question, and presently received the answer that variety is the spice of life. The truth of this profound observation is especially obvious after living for ten weeks in a sunny hotel-room, looking out upon stone pavements. Besides, one's senses become somewhat blunted to the joys of house-moving if repeated often enough, so I determined to forego these same pleasures, handed over all papers to Klüber, gave Engel my keys, explained that I should take up my lodgings in the Stenbock house in a week, and drove to the Moscow station. . . . I am now going to call on a pleasant acquaintance of earlier years, Princess Jussupoff. . . . It is in the nature of these people to harness slowly and to drive fast. I ordered my carriage two hours ago, and to all my inquiries, made about every ten minutes

during the last hour and a half, they have said, "*Ssits-chàss*" ("immediately"), with unshaken and amiable calm, but there the matter ends. You know my exemplary patience in waiting, but everything has its limits; at last there is a race, in which both horses and carriages are wrecked on the bad roads, and one finally arrives on foot. While writing I have drunk three glasses of tea, and put away a number of eggs; the attempts with the fire have also been so entirely successful that I feel the need of some fresh air. I should shave myself for very impatience if I had a mirror, in default of which, however, I shall greet my patroness Tata with yesterday's stubble beard. It is very virtuous really that my first thought is always of you whenever I have a moment free, and you should make me your example. This city is very rambling, and peculiarly foreign-looking, with its churches and green roofs and countless cupolas, quite different from Amsterdam, though the two are the most original cities that I know. No German guard has any idea of the luggage that can be slipped into one of these coupés; no Russian travels without two real covered pillows, children in baskets, and quantities of provisions of every sort, although they eat five big meals at the stations on the way, breakfast at two, dinner five, tea seven, supper ten (it's only four, to be sure, but enough for the short time). I was conducted to a sleeping carriage out of civility, where I was worse off than in my easy-chair; it is a wonder to me that so much fuss is made over one night.

ARCHANGELSKI, late in the Evening.

I little dreamed to-day a year ago that I should be sitting here, near the river on which Moscow is situated. About three miles above the town there is a castle, built in the Italian style, and standing in the midst of extensive grounds; in front is a wide lawn, sloping down to the river

in terraces, bordered by hedges like those at Schönbrunn, and to the left a pavilion stands near the water, and I pace about in its six rooms in solitude. A wide moonlit plain lies on the other side of the water, on this side of it a lawn, hedges, and an orangery; the wind howls in the chimney, and the flames flicker, old pictures look down on me from the walls in a ghostly manner, as do the white marble figures outside through the window; a very romantic solitude! The castle, being under repair, is uninhabited, and the owner, Prince Jussupow, meanwhile lives in the farmhouse. His wife is the daughter of the former Ambassador in Berlin, Ribeau-Pierre, at whose house I made my first entry into Berlin society in my youth. To-morrow I return to Moscow with my hosts; they leave the day after to-morrow for Berlin, *viâ* Petersburg, and I shall remain until Friday, if God wills, to see what is to be seen. The pen is too bad; I shall go to bed, although it looks very large and cold; good-night; God be with you and all the inhabitants of Reinfeld.

7*th*.—I slept very well in spite of the large, cold bed, had a good fire lighted, and am now looking over the steaming urn into the clearer but still very grey horizon, and into the entirely green surroundings of my pavilion; it is a pleasant spot, and one has the delightful sensation of being far removed from telegrams. My servant, like a true Russian, has, I see, slept on a gilt and silk-covered divan in the anteroom, and this seems to have been taken for granted in the domestic arrangements, as no special sleeping accommodation is set apart for the servants. . . .

Moscow, *June 8th*.

This city is really, for a city, the most beautiful and original that exists; the environs are pleasant, neither pretty nor ugly; but what a view there is from the Kremlin over this panorama of houses with green roofs,

gardens, churches, towers of the most extraordinary shape and colour, most of them green, red, or light blue, generally crowned on top by a colossal golden bulb, usually five

or more on one church, and surely a thousand towers! Anything more strangely beautiful than all this, illuminated by slanting sunset rays, it would be impossible to see. The weather is clear again, and I should stay here some days longer if rumours of a big battle in Italy were not in circulation, which may result in lots of diplomatic work, so that I must get back to my post. The house in which I am writing is also very wonderful; one of the few that survived 1812—old, thick walls, as in Schönhausen, Oriental architecture (Moorish), large rooms, almost entirely occupied by the *employés* of the Chancellory, who administer, or maladminister, Jussupow's estates. He, his wife, and I are lodged in the one habitable wing. Lots of love.

Your most faithful

V. B.

PETERSBURG, *June* 25, '59.

MY DEAR HEART,—I ought not to have been satisfied with the hasty lines I wrote you a week ago, and would have written again some days sooner if I had not at last to pay some tribute to the climate. Lumbago, an exceptionally bad attack, seized upon my limbs from various sides at once, and though I would not give in at first, it finally became so bad that I soon lay fettered, or, rather, sat, for lying down was not always an easy matter when

these nomadically inclined tormentors chose their seat in my back, instead of in legs and ribs. I advanced from the milder mustard remedies to those of cupping and blistering, and have found the Russians in their handling of these operations not quite free from the savagery which in my political sympathy for them I had imagined to be one of the inventions of prejudice. I now believe in the knout, although I have not seen one yet. I am once more rejoicing in the free use of my limbs, but, like Lazarus, I am covered with wounds and sores; however, they will soon heal, and I will not embitter my thanks to God for my recovery with complaints about this. This rheumatism, as you know, is not dangerous, though it is very painful; and one cold following another here, besides much night work and political vexation, brought about digestive troubles as well, and I am still on a diet, with a passion for fresh *compote*, which is ruinous for the father of a family when a pound of cherries costs one and a half roubles, and a pound of strawberries three and a half. But I think I will not deny myself these "roublish preserves" after eating cherries here three months ago at twelve roubles, and grapes at I don't know what, though not at my own expense, and after being served constantly since then at every dinner with everything that the year produces in any one of its months. . . . I was dreadfully homesick for you and all about you when I had to lie here so quiet and lonely, and whenever I looked at the pictures of you and the children I felt doubly forsaken. One gets so spoilt as a house-dog, and it was the first time since I left you in Frankfort that the restless whirl of business and court life left me time for low spirits. I am thinking more than ever of the possibility of giving up this continual turmoil as soon as I can. Who knows how long we may still live together in this world, and who knows what sort of times we may see here? A man becomes a stranger to God, his own family and himself, and the keys of his soul are so out of tune that he has not a note left which could give pleasure to a single person. This life is lacking in

what I might call the Sunday element—not a Frankfort, but a Kolziglow Sunday—a drop of rest in this feverish confusion, a bit of holiday-time in this workshop, where lies and passion hammer restlessly on the anvil of human ignorance. We say to ourselves, to be sure, that the world is going on in God's ways, and in thirty years, perhaps even in one, it will be all the same to us whether things happened this way or that; but if we try to hammer, too, we lose our breath, unless (like many of our friends) we provide ourselves with a neat-looking hammer of pasteboard and a mild little Offenbach heart of pressed leather. You must bring both with you for me; here at Stenbock's I haven't found them yet, although there is lots of wonderful furniture, and there won't be much room for ours. . . . Farewell, my sweetheart, and do not worry over all my grumbling; with God's help everything will turn out right, and I shall be well and happy with you. Much love to parents and children.

Your most faithful

VON B.

PETERHOF, *June* 28, '59.

MY DEAR HEART,—From the above you will see that I am on the heights again. I came here early to-day to take leave of "Ssudarina Matuschka," the Dowager Czarina, who goes to the seaside to-morrow. To me she seems to have something motherly in her charming naturalness, and I can talk to her as unreservedly as though I had known her from childhood. She talked to me a long time to-day about many things as she lay dressed in black on a *chaise-longue*, on a balcony with a view over the green, knitting at a white-and-red woollen shawl, with long wooden needles. I should have liked to listen for hours to her deep voice and honest laughing and chiding, so much at home did I feel. I had come in a dress-coat for a couple of hours

only, but when she finally said she did not want to say good-bye to me yet, and that probably I had a tremendous amount to do, I declared, "Not in the least"; to which she replied, "Then stay until I leave to-morrow." I was glad to take the invitation as a command, for it is charming here, and so stony in Petersburg. Imagine the heights of Oliva and Zoppot laid out as a park, and with a dozen castles between, with terraces, fountains, and lakes, shady walks and lawns, all the way to the sea, and above blue sky and warm sun, with white clouds, while out beyond the green sea of tree-tops is the real, blue sea, with sails and gulls; nothing has done me so much good for a long time. The Czar and Gortchakoff come in a few hours; then, I suppose, some business will break in upon the idyl; but, thank Heaven, it looks somewhat more peaceful in the world, in spite of our preparations for war, and I need not worry myself so much about resolutions which I could not approve. I have come to feel sorry for the Austrian soldiers; they must be led too stupidly, to have met with so many defeats—on the 24th again! The French will become over-confident. It is a lesson for Rechberg and his Ministers which they, in their obstinacy, will not take to heart at all. We should undoubtedly have stood by them, if we had had even enough confidence in them to believe that they would not betray us while we were fighting for them. I should fear France less than Austria from the moment we took the war upon ourselves. . . . Let Schmidt* bring what he needs for the children in the way of schoolroom things, books, &c., &c. There is nothing of the kind here. Dearest love to old and young and middle-aged. Farewell, my darling.

Your most faithful

VON B.

* Tutor.

PETERSBURG, *July* 2, '59.

MY DEAR HEART,—I received your letter of the 25th yesterday, and to-morrow you will probably get the one I sent to Stettin on Wednesday with the Dowager Czarina. My homesick heart follows it with yearning thoughts; it was such charming clear weather with fresh winds when we escorted her Majesty on board at Peterhof that I should have liked to leap on the ship, in uniform and without baggage, and go with her. Since then the heat has increased to about the temperature of a freely watered palm-house, and my lack of summer clothes is making itself decidedly felt. I go about in the rooms in my under garments, as the dear blue dressing-gown is too thick now, even at six o'clock in the morning. A courier roused me half-an-hour ago, with his war and peace, and I cannot sleep any more now, although I did not get to bed until about two. Our politics are drifting more and more into the Austrian wake, and as soon as we have fired a shot on the Rhine, it will be all over with the war between Italy and Austria, and, instead of it, a war between France and Prussia will take the stage, in which Austria, after we have lifted the burden from her shoulders, will stand by us or will not stand by us, just as her own interests dictate. She will certainly not allow us to play a brilliantly victorious *rôle*. It is quite remarkable that in such crises Catholic Ministers always hold the reins of our destiny—Radowitz once before, now Hohenzollern, who has the predominant influence, and is in favour of war. I look with misgiving into the future; our troops are not better than the Austrian, for they only serve half as long; and the German troops, on whose support we reckon, are for the most part quite wretched, and, if things go ill with us, their leaders will fall away from us like dry leaves in the wind. But God, who can hold up or cast

down Prussia, and the world, knows why these things must be, and we will not embitter ourselves against the land in which we were born, and against the authorities for whose enlightenment we pray. In thirty years, perhaps much sooner, it will be a small matter to us how things stand with Prussia and Austria, if only the mercy of God and the merits of Christ remain to us. I opened the Scriptures last evening, at random, just to rid my anxious heart of politics, and my eye lighted immediately on the 5th verse of the 110th Psalm. As God wills—it is, after all, only a question of time, nations and people, folly and wisdom, war and peace; they come and go like waves, and the sea remains. What are our states and their power and honour before God but ant-hills and bee-hives which the hoof of an ox tramples down, or fate, in the form of a honey-gatherer, overtakes? . . . Farewell, my sweetheart, and learn to take a melancholy pleasure in life's folly; there is nothing in this world but hypocrisy and jugglery, and whether fever or grape-shot shall tear away this mask of flesh, fall it must, sooner or later, and then such a resemblance will become apparent between a Prussian and an Austrian, if they are of the same size, like Schreck and Rechberg, for example, that it will be difficult to distinguish between them; the stupid and the clever, too, properly reduced to the skeleton state, look a good deal like each other. Patriotism for a particular country is destroyed by this reflection, but in any case we should have to despair, even now, if our happiness were built upon it. Farewell once more, with love to parents and children. How impatient I am to see them! As soon as *Vriendschap* —as our vessel is called—is in sight, I shall telegraph. With love as always,

Your most faithful

VON B.

LAZIENKI, *October* 17, '59.

MY DEAR HEART,—Here I am at Lazienki. This morning I was looking in the first Polish station for the ticket-office, in order to be registered for this place, when a benevolent fate in the shape of a white-bearded Russian general seized me (Prittivitz is the angel's name), and before I could really recover my senses my passport was wrested from the police and my luggage from the custom-house officials, and I was transplanted from the slow train to the special of the Prince of Orange, and was sitting with one of this charming young gentleman's cigars in my mouth, between three Dutchmen and two Russians, in an imperial drawing-room car, and, after a good dinner at Petrikau or Piotskoff, arrived at the station here, where the Emperor was awaiting the Prince, and where I was separated by the gilded crowd from Alexander and baggage. My carriage was waiting; I had to get in, and my questions, which I called out in various languages, as to where I was to lodge, and my wish that Alexander Raymond should be told the place, died away in the clatter of the carriage with which two excited stallions were galloping me off into the night. I must have been driven for half-an-hour in wild haste through the darkness, and now I am sitting here in uniform with the ribbons of my orders which we all donned at the last station, tea near me, a mirror before me, and I don't know a thing beyond the fact that I am in the Stanislaus August pavilion, in Lazienki; I don't know where that is, and live in the hope that Alexander, in his somewhat more comfortable costume, will soon discover traces of me. Judging from the rushing noise, there seem to be high trees or fountains in front of my window; except for a great many people in court-livery, I haven't discovered any human beings about. . . . The Emperor comes to Breslau early on the 23rd, stays there for a week from

to-day, and then, my angel, in two days, I shall come to you. . . . With much love,

Your most faithful

v. B.

LAZIENKI, *October* 19, '59.

MY BELOVED,—I can only tell you simply that I am well. Yesterday I was *en grandeur* all day: breakfast with the Emperor, then long audience, just as gracious as in P., and very sympathetic; calls, dinner at his Majesty's, theatre in the evening, very good ballet, and all the boxes full of pretty women. Now I have slept splendidly, the tea is standing on the table, and after I have drunk it I shall go out driving. The Emperor comes to Breslau early on the 23rd; and we shall probably go to Berlin early on the 25th. The above-mentioned tea, which I have just finished, really consisted not only of tea, but of coffee, six eggs, three kinds of meat, pastry, and one bottle of Bordeaux, and from the justice I did it early in the morning you would see that my journey did not do me any harm. The wind is blowing here over the Vistula as though giving vent to its wrath, and is rumbling in the chestnuts and limes that surround me, so that the yellow leaves whirl against the windows; but here, within, with double windows, tea, and the thought of you and the children, it is easy to smoke my cigar in comfort. Unfortunately all comfort in the world has its limits, and I am only waiting till the people in the next room, where I hear Alexander's voice eagerly asking for a corkscrew, have finished their breakfast, to throw myself into a carriage and to drive first to various castles and then into town. Eulenburg* has just been announced. Farewell. Much love to all.

Your most faithful

v. B.

* Consul-General at Warsaw.

BERLIN, Wednesday, *April* 25, '60.

. . . I have just come from my fourth farewell audience, but it is not the last. Kindly but imperative request that I remain "a few days" longer, and kind regards to you.

Yesterday I dined with old Lottum. I have now discovered that new port wine is very good for me. In the evening I was with Agnes Pourtalès until twelve. I had really hoped to leave to-morrow, and am now somewhat bewildered and depressed. My longing grows with every glimpse of the sun. Give best love to old and young, and especially to your father.

Your most faithful

v. B.

The sparrows are sitting, with ruffled feathers, on the balcony railing, and thinking, "Where is Nanne with the biscuits?"

BERLIN, Friday.
(Postmark, *April* 27, '60.)

As in old days, my heart, I write to you once again from the Chamber—now the Upper House. . . . My longing to get away from here is getting to be a disease with me; homesickness for the north-east, and ideal pictures of home-life on the Neva crowd my dreams. How long, O God, how long? The flight of marble stairs, the green room, and the boats on the Spree are unendurable to me. Farewell. God be with you all, and bring us together soon.

Your most faithful

v. B.

B., Friday.
(Postmark, BERLIN, *May* 4, '60.)

I have sent you the knives and forks to-day, my dearest heart. If there are not fifty, or if they are not the right ones, then we have been cheated, but they only cost ten silver groschen. Last evening I was at the Regent's. I was complaining about the cold, windy weather. "And do you want to go to Petersburg in this weather?" he put in. I said it wasn't any worse there than here, and a person must live somewhere, hence my wish to leave. Then Prince Frederick William said: "I shan't say good-bye to you any more, however, for I have done so four times already, and you are still here." Thereupon I cast a glance at his father, which meant, "There, now you hear it from your own son," but just as I did so he turned away and left us standing. The prospect seems bad, and yet I cannot say anything in reply to your Reinfeld questions of to-day, but will await the reply to an official inquiry about my leaving, which I sent in to the Ministry yesterday.

The delegates had a sharp quarrel to-day. Moritz fell upon Schleinitz, good in idea, weak in expression, but courageous. If only it would lead to their suspecting me and saying to me, "Sir, just clear off to your post!" I make myself as disagreeable as possible. I must go to Oscar's now, or they'll die of hunger there.

BERLIN, Monday.
(Postmark, *May* 7, '60.)

. . . I am sitting here on the balcony cliff, like the Lorelei, and I see the Spree skipper pass through the lock, but I am not singing and I have not much trouble in

combing my hair. I think I am getting terribly old in this hotel; the seasons and the tribes of travellers and waiters pass by before me, and still I stay on in the little green room, feed the sparrows, and lose more hair every day. . . . The wheel of time has forgotten me here, like Barbarossa in the Kyffhäuser, and I wait and wait for things which never come. After three days of vain efforts I met Schleinitz accidentally yesterday at a dinner at Redern's; my request that the Countess Perponcher and I should be either put out of suspense, or else temporarily married to each other for the rest of the time of waiting, seemed to him just, and he was willing to help the Countess, at least, by giving Perponcher * leave of absence, and handing the business over to Croy again, as there was nothing special to do. I declared, rather drily, that I should prefer going away to enduring any longer this "langen und bangen in schwebender Pein." † He then begged me to wait quietly "a few days" longer, and hinted vaguely at important changes. I told him that I had no desire for such a thing; I wanted to remain what I was; unless they thought of sending me to Frankfort, and then the anxieties now weighing upon him could be lightened. "Would you really—if it were offered?" "Yes." "But Olympia?" "Well, I can't marry her, but my house in Petersburg shall be free to her if we exchange." Therewith the conversation ended. The fact that Schleinitz is at one with Auerswald, Hohenzollern, and the Regent, in wanting to keep me here, proves that no decisions have been made even yet in the most important matters. The thought of living in Berlin does not please me; if I cannot go to Frankfort, my first choice would be Petersburg, and then London or Naples, rather than here. But as God wills; it seems to me already too much to have expressed the wish to go to Frankfort. . . .

Your most faithful

v. B.

* Count Perponcher was *chargé d'affaires* in Petersburg.

† Waiting and longing in changeful torture.

BERLIN, Saturday.
(Postmark, *May* 12, '60.)

I am well, my heart; sending, herewith, pictures, gloves, lorgnette. Upon my further attempt to get off, irritability, and a command to remain, *sans phrase*. So for the present I can do nothing but grumble inwardly. Thousand greetings. Thiergarten my comfort. Nightingales charming; green, but very hot.

Your most faithful

v. B.

BERLIN, *May* 17, '60.

MY DEAR HEART,—This is Ascension-Day—that is all very fine, but, unfortunately, not Departure-Day, and that is very sad. I am waiting in quiet resignation, and reckoning, dejectedly, that I still have a whole week before the session ends. For almost a fortnight I haven't spoken a word of business, or, at any rate, business of my office, and for another week it will be just the same. I might just as well have spent the three weeks quietly with you. I am very melancholy at thus wasting the most beautiful time of the year, especially when I say to myself beforehand that no substantial result of any kind will come of it. Feeding sparrows, Röder and Harry appearing as usual, dinner at Oscar's—all just as before you left, only no more fires, and the bare bushes in the grass plot have turned into mountains of white blossom. I called on the Countess Perponcher yesterday, and found her in mild despair; she is going off with the children to some watering-place without waiting for her husband. The children sent me very nice letters to-day; thank them, and tell them to

read their letters over carefully before they send them, so as to discover where they have dropped words or written nonsense, and correct them. They must be willing to give up so much of their time to me. I am going to the Thiergarten—my only amusement. To-day it will be very full. Farewell.

Your most faithful

v. B.

Roon has challenged Vincke ; but I hope we shall smoothe the matter over. Really, this time it was unreasonable ; we ourselves say much more aggravating things to other Ministers ; it's all in the way of business, and in every Parliament there are churls, but one doesn't always shoot them. Love to all.

BERLIN, *May* 17, '62.

MY DEAR HEART,—At last I have had news of you—yesterday evening—and am very thankful that God's gracious protection has accompanied you and kept you through all dangers. . . . You have behaved with the courage and decision of a Joan of Arc, but still, it makes me rather anxious when you travel without a servant. The exertion of going to Wygode, and the sorrow connected with the journey, cannot have been good for your poor, feeble body. Our dear parents will nurse you till you put on weight. Mother has probably scolded well at my handing you over in such a thin condition. I am thankful that you are in the haven. Our future is just as uncertain as at Petersburg ; Berlin is more to the fore again ; I do nothing for and nothing against it, but I shall drink myself drunk when I once have my Paris credentials in my pocket. London is entirely out of the question for the present, but everything may be changed again. The

King is very gracious, talks over everything with me, except future ambassadorships. . . . Hearty love.

Your most faithful

v. B.

BERLIN, *May* 21, '62.

FRAU VON BISMARCK,

Schönhausen, Reinfeld, Old Pomerania.

MY DEAR HEART,—Your letter came yesterday, to my delight, with the Wentzel enclosure, which I will attend to. No decision has yet been made here. Perhaps Heydt's ambition will save me; he wants to be Prime Minister himself; I do not wish for this position unless I have the Foreign Office with it; and then Bernstorff wants to stay, or to hold London open for himself. On Saturday I shall have been here a fortnight; then I shall explode, and demand either a post or permission to resign. . . . Yesterday I was with the widowed Queen for an hour and a half; she was very amiable in her grief, reminiscences, and tears. The photograph in mourning is not in the least like her. I was at Sans Souci again for the first time since the autumn of '57, and many pictures of the past rose up before me out of the blossoming bushes. I am engaged every hour of the day without really having anything to do, and the pressure of calls is just as bad as in Petersburg. Farewell, beloved angel. Much love.

Your most faithful

v. B.

BERLIN, *May* 23, '62.

MY DEAR HEART,—You have already seen in the papers that I have been appointed to Paris. I am very glad, but

there is a shadow in the background. I was already as good as caught for the Ministry; my disapproval of the Hesse affair and the indecision of Bernstorff have set me free for the present. I asked definitely and officially for an appointment, or leave to resign, and three hours later received my nomination, as Bernstorff could not decide so quickly about his resignation. I leave as soon as I can get away, to-morrow or the day after, for Paris. . . . I am not coming to you beforehand, because I want to take possession in Paris first; perhaps they will discover another Prime Minister when I am once out of their sight. I am not going to Schönhausen, either, for fear they might keep me here after all. I rode about as major for four hours yesterday, so I received my appointment to Paris in the saddle. The chestnut mare is here, and is my joy and relaxation in the Thiergarten; I shall take her with me. I have both hands full to make it possible to get off. The next letter, I hope, will be from Paris; write to me there, "Ambassade de Prusse, Rue de Lille." Farewell, my sweetheart. A thousand greetings.

Your most faithful

v. B.

BERLIN, *May* 25, '62.

MY DEAR HEART,—You write very seldom, and you certainly have more time than I. I have hardly had a really good night's rest since I have been here. Yesterday I went out at eight in the morning, came back in haste to the house five times to change my clothes; at eight went to Potsdam again to see Prince Frederick Charles, and back here again at eleven. To-day, at four, I have just had my first free minute, and am using it to heap these fiery coals on your black head. I expect to leave for Paris to-morrow, at latest Tuesday; whether for long Heaven only knows; perhaps only for months or weeks. They

are all conspiring here to make me stay, and I shall be very thankful when I have gained a resting-place on the Seine, and have a porter who will admit no one to me for several days. . . . I don't know yet whether I can send our chattels to Paris at all; for it's possible I shall be called back here before they arrive. I am attempting flight, rather than taking up a new abode. I have had to be very firm in order to get away, for the present, from this life of hotels and suspense. I am ready for all that God may send, and only regret to be separated from you without being able to look forward to any definite time when we shall see each other again. If there is any prospect of my staying in Paris till the winter, then you must follow me soon, I think, and we will settle down comfortably, even though it be for a short time. It will have to be decided in July whether I return before the end of the summer session, or remain in Paris long enough to fetch you all. I shall do what I can to bring about the latter result, and, anyway, I should like to have you in Paris, if only for a short time, and without any regular establishment, so that you may have seen it. There was a grand military dinner yesterday, where I figured as major—parade beforehand. The chestnut mare is my daily delight in the Thiergarten, but not quiet enough for military purposes. Now I am going to a farewell dinner at Malle's with numerous friends; a free noon at last. Give love and kisses to big and small, and write to me.

Your most faithful

v. B.

PARIS, *May* 31, '62.

MY DEAR HEART,—Only a few lines in the press of business to tell you I am well, but very lonely, with a view out over the green, in this dull, rainy weather, while the bumble-bees hum and the sparrows twitter. Grand

audience to-morrow. It's vexatious that I have to buy linen, towels, table-cloths, and sheets. It is not yet certain that I shall remain here, and will not be decided till a substitute has been found for Hohenlohe in the Ministry, and an Ambassador for London. . . . Farewell. Hearty love, and write!

Your most faithful

v. B.

PARIS, *June* 1, '62.

MY DEAR HEART,—The Emperor received me to-day, and I handed over my credentials; he received me kindly, is looking well; he has grown somewhat stouter, but is by no means fat and elderly, as he is generally represented to be in caricatures. The Empress is one of the most beautiful women I know, in spite of Petersburg; she has, if anything, grown handsomer in the past five years. The whole affair was official and ceremonious; I was taken back in a court-carriage with the master of the ceremonies, &c. Next time I shall probably have a private audience. I long for business, for I don't know what to do with myself. To-day I dined alone, the young gentlemen were out; it rained all the evening; and I was at home alone. To whom should I go? In the midst of big Paris I am lonelier than you are at Reinfeld, and sit here like a rat in a deserted house. The only pleasure I have had was sending the cook away for overcharges. You know my indulgence in this matter, but Rembours was a child in comparison. I am dining for the present in a café. How long this will last, God knows. I shall probably receive a summons, by telegram, to Berlin in eight or ten days, and then good-bye to song and dance. If my opponents only knew what a boon their victory would be to me, and how heartily I desire it! Rechberg would, perhaps, do his best to have me called to Berlin out of malice! You can't have any

greater aversion to the Wilhelmstrasse than I have, and if I am not persuaded that it *must* be, I will not go. I consider it cowardice and disloyalty to leave the King in the lurch under pretence of illness. If it is not to be, then God will permit those who are on the look-out to find another *princillon* who will offer himself as cover for the pot. If it is to be, then "*s'Bogom*" ("with God"), as our Russian drivers used to say, when they took up the reins. I am going to my great tester-bed, as broad as it is long. I am the only living soul in the upper storey, and I don't think there is any one on the ground floor. Good-night, my angel, God be with you and all your dear co-inmates.

Your

v. B.

PARIS, *June* 14, '62.

MY DEAR HEART,—I have had no letter from you again for four days, but I am not implacable, and write to say I am well. It is anything but warm here—rain, wind, and a chilly atmosphere. I was not nearly so cold in Petersburg. The good folks of Paris imagine themselves to be Southerners, and lead the life of Neapolitans in the climate of Germany. . . . There are a great many Russians here, Obolenski, Chauveau, Stroganoff, Baratinsky, Troubetzkoy, and others. I take my meals at home, and have already dismissed two cooks for swindling. A third will soon follow if I stay here much longer, as to which I still know nothing. It is more amusing at a café, but the food is so rich and so highly seasoned, it doesn't suit me. . . I have much less to do than I had at Petersburg. Little Ranke, the Professor, dined with me yesterday. . . . Farewell; my love to parents and children.

Your most faithful

v. B.

PARIS, *June* 18, '62.

MY DEAR HEART,—To-day I have had to bring myself to lighting a fire, after struggling against the thought for several days. It rains every living day, and very hard at night, and when the sun once shows itself I sit down on a chair in the garden and let it shine on my back. I don't like to go out in the evening; for, as the Parisians have the firm and fixed idea that they live in a very warm climate, they would consider it insulting to the honour of their country if they did not have doors and windows open until midnight, and did not sit in forty-five or fifty degrees in a draught, and in damp, cold winds. They are incredibly hardened to it, and wear linen trousers because the calendar says it is summer. . . . Nothing definite yet from Berlin. Bought Paris guide. Farewell, my beloved angel. God be with you and your flock. Hearty love.

Your most faithful

V. B.

LONDON, *June* 30, '62.

MY DEAR HEART,—You see I *did* have to come to London, and I have been here, with Harry Arnim, for an hour, having left Paris at nine to-day; very pretty green country on both sides of the channel, and a merry wind on the sea; the crossing took about an hour and three-quarters from Boulogne to Folkestone, and now I am sitting at No. 41C, Park Street, Grosvenor Square, in a cosy room, waiting for dinner, very hungry— Now I have had dinner, and am going out, so I will close; I only wanted to tell you that I am here and well, and send you my love. I expect to go back to Paris on Thursday, and

to find there, by God's help, good news of you and the children.

Your most faithful

v. B.

PARIS, *July* 5, Evening.

MY DEAR HEART,—I have just got back from London; rejoice to find your two letters, the second Tuesday's, and send only a word to say that I am very well, but too sleepy to say more. It was very pleasant there, but the English Ministers know less about Prussia than about Japan and Mongolia, and they are not any cleverer than ours. Hearty love.

Your tired

v. B.

Harry is playing very nicely on the Embassy Erard.

PARIS, *July* 14, '62.

MY DEAR HEART,—I am delighted to find you all well from your letter of the 9th, which I hope to read again early to-morrow morning. The courier in expectation of whom I left London in haste a week ago, arrived at last to-day. I should have liked a few days more there; there were so many beautiful faces and fine horses. But the German Embassy filled me with horror. It is handsomely furnished, but there are only three rooms on the ground floor, the Chancellory, the dining-room, and between them a room that serves both as cabinet for his Excellency, and anteroom before a dinner-party. If one wants to wash, &c., one has to go up the grand staircase, through the marital chamber with its single bed, and into a little hole

of a dressing-room! Upstairs there are one large reception-room, one small ball-room, and the bedroom and dog-hole aforesaid. This is all. Then on the second floor, two rooms for the secretary, and five little dens for children, governess, tutor, &c. Servants' rooms in the attic, and an underground kitchen. It made me feel quite ill to think of being boxed up there, and I thanked God heartily that it was not to be our portion. . . . Bernstorff is delighted with it . . . and the King is having it refurnished, quite unnecessarily, as a fact. . . . Since yesterday the weather has been fine; up to then it was miserably cold, and rained incessantly. I took advantage of the change to dine at St. Germain with Hatzfeld and Loe. The forest is pretty, and there is a fine terrace overlooking the Seine, with a charming view of woods, hills, towns, and villages, a vista of green and white stretching away to Paris. I have just had a drive in the mild moonlight through the Bois de Boulogne; there were thousands of carriages in line, little lakes with coloured lights, an open-air concert. Now I am going to bed. All my colleagues have left, and the only acquaintance with whom I am friendly in the great city is old Thiers, a state of things we little foresaw twenty years ago! Farewell, my sweetheart. God keep you all.

Your most faithful

v. B.

July 18, '62.

My beloved Heart,—I got leave for six weeks yesterday, and it seems very strange to me that I should not have hurried off to you, to enjoy the delight of being in your midst, after so long a separation. But I have only the choice of growing fast to the hotel in Berlin again, or taking advantage of mountain and sea air here. There is nothing to keep me in Paris. The city is deserted by the people with whom I have to do. My request for leave was

answered at once by a summons to come first to Berlin. I know what this would mean. I answered that mountain and sea-air had been prescribed for me, and that I need bracing if I am to play the Minister presently. Thereupon leave was granted me to go to Bagnères de Luchon. I dare not slip incognito through Berlin to Reinfeld for fear of giving offence in high quarters, and if I made my way to Stolpmünde I should not be able to get through Berlin without paying toll of several weeks. They all declare there that they are in need of sea-air, and miserable at having to spend their time in Berlin. Besides, I really promise myself the best effect on my health from my sojourn in the mountains, and hope, after six weeks, when I have promised to come to Berlin, to see you all again, safe and sound. . . .

I can't stand Paris any longer; my only distraction is scolding the cook. The theatre is a kind of Turkish bath in this heat, and I have next to nothing to do and no acquaintances. Ewald Ungern was a passing relief yesterday. He has gone to Berlin to-day, and will stop at Hohendorf, if he finds that Uncle Alex is there. I am divided between contentment at leaving the hot dust here and vexation at seeing our separation so prolonged; but I would rather stay here and yawn than be at anchor in the Hôtel Royal again. Commending you all to God's faithful protection, and with dearest love.

Your most faithful

v. B.

TROUVILLE, *July* 20, '62.

MY DEAR HEART,—I came here to see whether I could get a little bathing; but I am terribly bored, and the thought of spending weeks here is unendurable. Shore, sea, and coast-line are as beautiful as can be, but the selfish unsociableness of the French makes a stay here only possible when one brings an establishment. Every

one keeps to himself, with his wife. The Metternichs have a bevy of relatives who live, six couples strong, in a big house. It is fairly amusing in the evening there, as far as it can be for one who finds himself a stranger in a circle of intimate friends. But during the day there is no sort of social intercourse; one dines at *table d'hôte* with French people, silent as in a Carthusian monastery, and my room, without a sofa, would be unendurable but for the view over the sea. I should leave this evening if I had not accepted an invitation to Metternich's. So to-morrow I shall probably move on, either to Cherbourg, to see fleet and ironclads, or to Paris, leaving a day later for the south. Whether I shall carry out my itinerary I don't yet know; I have such a feeling of homesickness that I shall be casting all consideration for Berlin to the four winds presently, and coming to you all. There is a very pretty Countess Pourtalès here, but I am so bored that I can't manage to fall in love with her the least little bit. Otherwise I am very well, and am breathing the sea-air with delight. But one forgets entirely how to talk among those doleful French, every one of whom fears to be taken for less important than he would like to be, and with that idea stares at his own nose, and has nothing to do with anybody.

My pen won't write; it is steel and it sputters! Farewell, my angel. I shall find news from you in Paris to-morrow, or, if I should go to Cherbourg, then on Thursday. Much love.

Your most faithful

v. B.

PARIS, *July* 25, '62.

I write in frantic haste, sweetheart, to say that I am just starting safe and sound to Blois, and hope (*D.V.*) to be at Bordeaux on Sunday evening. Love to all.

Your most faithful

v. B.

Blois, *July* 25, '62.

My dear Heart,—To relieve any anxiety you may feel on my account, my darling, I write you a second letter to-day, announcing my safe arrival on the banks of the Loire, in splendid weather. The day has been almost too warm, but now, at 10 P.M., there is a soft coolness in the air that makes me long to sleep out of doors, by the river, which is something like the Main, but rather broader, flat and full of sandbanks. A French provincial town like this is a strange mixture of outer luxury and inner poverty. I am sitting before a marble mantelpiece with a gold mirror, in front of it a handsome clock which won't go, and writing at an old broken gaming-table, with a narrow-necked earthen bottle as inkstand, in a room ten feet square, drinking seltzer (siphon), with *sirop de groseilles*. In affluence such a town is far beyond one of ours of the same size, but I could not live here. The disparity between classes, not only in education, but in manners and breeding is very remarkable as compared with the general level among us. Even in Paris, polite forms are customary only in the higher circles of society, and as soon as you leave the *banlieue* behind, you encounter a boorishness in forms of intercourse beside which the good tone of the *bourgeoisie* of Rummelsberg or Schlawe appears in a brilliant light. Even the officers, a fleeting acquaintance with whom I made in the café, disturb the feeling of sincere appreciation I have for this really excellent army by their bad manners. From the military standpoint, we may learn a great deal from them, and you know my preference for all soldiers, but *c'est étonnant, comme on est mal élevé et inhospitalier*. I am killing the time till ten o'clock with these reflections, for I cannot go to sleep before that. I am going to Chambord to-morrow at 6 A.M., and am to stay the night with M. le Comte de Villeneuve, at

Chenonceaux, not far from Amboise. To-day I visited the fine old castle here. It is like a bit of Heidelberg in good preservation, as far as architecture goes, only smaller, and full of historic interest. Ask Herbert about the residence of the court here under Catherine de' Medici, and the murder of the Duc de Guise. I hope to get letters from you at Bordeaux on Monday, or at latest at Bayonne on Wednesday. Write on receipt of this to Barrèges, Hautes Pyrénées, and later to Bagnères de Luchon, both Poste Restante. Best love to parents and children.

Your most faithful

V. B.

BORDEAUX, *July* 27, '62.

MY DEAR HEART,—You must admit that I am a good correspondent; I wrote this morning from Chenonceaux to the birthday-child, and now this evening I am sending a letter from the city of red wine to you. But these lines will arrive a day later than the first, as the mail does not leave until to-morrow afternoon. I left Paris the day before yesterday at noon only, but it seems to me a week. I have seen some very beautiful castles—Chambord, of which the enclosed (torn out of a book) gives but an imperfect idea, corresponds, in its desolation, to the fate of its owner (I hope you know it belongs to the Duc de Bordeaux). In the wide halls and magnificent rooms, where so many kings held their court, with their mistresses and their hunting, the Duke's childish toys are now the only furniture. My guide took me for a French Legitimist, and squeezed out a tear as she showed me the little cannon. I paid for the teardrop, tariff-wise, with an extra franc, although it is not my vocation to subsidise Carlism. The castle courtyards lay in the sun as quiet as deserted churchyards; there is a fine view from the towers, but on all sides silent woods and heather to the very horizon;

not a town, not a village, not a farmhouse, either near the castle or in the region round it. The enclosed sprigs of heather will no longer show you the rich purple of this plant I love so much as it blooms here; it is the only flower in the royal garden, as swallows are the only living creatures in the castle; it is too solitary for sparrows. The situation of the old Castle of Amboise is glorious; from the top one can see up and down the Loire for about thirty miles. Coming thence to this place one passes gradually into the south; wheat disappears, giving way to maize; between are wreathing vines and chestnut woods, castles and country-seats with many towers, chimneys, and balconies, all white, with high pointed slate roofs. It was very hot, and I was glad to have a half-coupé to myself. In the evening there was glorious lightning in the whole eastern sky, and now an agreeable coolness, which I should find sultry at home. The sun set at 7.35; in Petersburg one can see now, without a light, at eleven o'clock. As yet there is no letter for me here; perhaps I shall find one at Bayonne. I shall stay here probably two days, to see where our wines grow. Now, good-night, my angel. Dearest love.

Your most faithful

v. B.

San Sebastian, *August* 1, '62.

My dear Heart,—I little thought last year that I should celebrate Bill's birthday this time in Spain. I shall not fail to drink his health in dark red wine, and I pray God earnestly to take and keep all of you under His protection; it is now half-past three, and I imagine you have just got up from table and are sitting in the front hall at your coffee, if the sun permits. It is probably not so burning there as it is here, but it doesn't do me any harm, and I am feeling splendidly well. The route from Bayonne

here is glorious; on the left the Pyrenees, in a shifting Alpine panorama, something like the Dent du Midi and Moleson, which, however, are here called "Pic" and "Port," on the right the shores of the sea, as at Genoa. The change on entering Spain is surprising; at Behobie, the last place in France, one could easily believe one's self still on the Loire; then Fuentarabia with a steep street, twelve feet wide, every window with balcony and curtain, every balcony with black eyes and mantillas, beauty and dirt; in the market-place drums and fifes, and some hundreds of women, old and young, dancing a fandango, while the men draped in their cloaks looked on, smoking. Thus far the country is exceptionally beautiful — green valleys and wooded slopes, with fantastic lines of jagged cliff above them, row after row; very narrow inlets of the sea, which cut deep into the land, like Salzburg lakes in the mountain basins. I look down on such an one from my window, separated from the sea by an island of rocks, set in a steep frame of mountains with woods and houses; below, to the left, the city and harbour. My old friend Galen, who is taking the baths here, with his wife and son, received me most warmly; I bathed with him at ten, and after breakfast we walked, or, rather, crawled, through the heat up to the citadel, and sat for a long time on a bench there, the sea a hundred feet below us, near us a heavy fortress-battery with a singing sentry. This hill or rock would be an island did not a flat tongue of land connect it with the mainland. This tongue of land separates two inlets from each other, so on the north one gets a distant view of the sea from the citadel, towards the east and west a view of both inlets, like two Swiss lakes, and towards the south of the tongue of land, with the town on it, and behind it, landward, mountains as high as heaven. I wish I could paint you a picture of it, and if we both were fifteen years younger we would come here together. To-morrow, or the day after, I go back to Bayonne. . . . I am very much sunburnt, and should have liked to float on the sea for an hour to-day; the water bears me up like a piece of wood.

It is still just cool enough to be pleasant. By the time one gets to the cabin one is almost dry, and I put on my hat only, and take a walk in my peignoir. The ladies bathe fifty paces off—custom of the country. . . . I like the Spaniards less than their country; they are not very civil, talk too loudly, and the arrangements are in many ways behind those in Russia. Custom-house and passport annoyances without end, an incredible number of turnpike tolls, four francs for one hour's drive; I should stay here still longer but for these drawbacks, instead of going to Biarritz, where a bathing-costume is necessary. Love to our dear parents and children. Farewell, my angel.

Your

v. B.

BIARRITZ, *August* 4, '62.

. . . I am sitting in a corner room of the Hotel de l'Europe, with a charming view over the blue sea, which drives its white foam between wonderful cliffs and against the lighthouse. I feel quite guilty at seeing so many beautiful things without you. If one could only bring you hither through the air, I would go right back with you to San Sebastian. Imagine the Siebengebirge with the Drachenfels by the sea; near them Ehrenbreitstein, and between the two an arm of the sea, somewhat wider than the Rhine, forcing its way into the land, and forming a round bay behind the mountains. In this you bathe in water transparently clear, and so heavy and salty that you lie easily right on top of it, and can look through the wide gate of rocks to the sea, or landward, where the mountain chains tower up one after another ever higher and ever bluer. The women of the middle and lower classes are strikingly pretty, sometimes beautiful; the men surly and uncivil, and the comforts of life to which we are accustomed in civilised lands are entirely lacking. In this

respect I find Russia pleasanter to travel in than Spain. What actually drove me out of the country was the swinishness in certain indispensable arrangements, the cheating in the hotels, and the tolls. The heat there is no worse than here, and doesn't affect me; on the contrary, I am very well, thank Heaven. The day before yesterday there was a storm the like of which I have never seen. I had to make three attempts before I succeeded in climbing the flight of four steps on the quay. Pieces of stone and of trees flew through the air; I unfortunately gave up my place in a sailing-vessel for Bayonne, as I didn't believe it possible that all would be quiet and cheerful again in four hours' time; so I missed a charming sail along the coast, stayed one day longer in San Sebastian, and left yesterday by the diligence, rather uncomfortably packed in between two attractive little Spanish women, to whom I could not speak a single word. Still, they understood Italian enough for me to make clear to them my satisfaction with their exterior. Gr. Gallen and his wife were very kind to me. I was looking for a fan, as I wanted to bring you something Spanish, and Frau Gallen gave me hers for you; it is simple, but painted in the characteristic style of the country. You would like the wife very much; he, too, is a good fellow, but she has more brains. I got Bernhard's long-expected letter to-day. He takes a gloomy view of politics, is expecting another child, and is building barns and stables. I long for news from you and the children. . . . Dearest love to all.

Your most faithful

v. B.

BIARRITZ, *August* 10, '62.

MY BELOVED HEART,— . . . I am living about as at Stolpmünde, only without champagne; I drank some with Orloff to-day, for the first time since I left Paris. In the afternoon

I wander about among the cliffs, heaths, and fields, see orchards with aloe, figs, almonds, and borders of tamarind, then I do some target-shooting, take my bath, sit on the rocks, smoking, gazing at the sea, and thinking of you all. Politics I have entirely forgotten; I read no papers. The 15th gives me some qualms. Strictly speaking, I ought to go to Paris since I am in France, to congratulate the Emperor, hear his speech, and attend the dinner. But I shall hardly bring myself to the point of travelling over five hundred miles and interrupting the air-and-water cure, which is doing me so much good that I actually hate the thought of the dusty, close air of the capital. The Emperor is too reasonable a gentleman to take my absence amiss, and from Berlin I have genuine leave of absence. . . . Farewell, my angel, with dearest love,

Your most faithful

V. B.

BIARRITZ, *August* 11, '62.

MY BELOVED HEART,—I am hoping every day that the mail will bring me a letter from you, in consequence of my having asked you to write *viâ* Paris, where it is known that I am here; to-morrow, perhaps! I have been without news since I left San Sebastian, and may God grant that the next may be good. It is my fault for staying here; but the first baths in the warm, salty foam did me so much good that I went on, and with the same result; after each bath I feel a year less on my aging head; and if I can bring them up to thirty (seventeen I have taken already, counting Trouville and St. Sebastian), you will see me again as a Göttingen student. Unfortunately, the catch-polls are after me. A letter from Bernstorff is pursuing me, has been announced to me by telegram, was sent by a lucky misunderstanding to Bagnères de Luchon, whence it cannot reach me for four days—mountains without railroad, and one post daily!

If only it does not bring a direct summons to Berlin! I am all sea-salt and sun. Since the Orloffs have come I have not lacked companionship. Him you know, and you would like her just as well. She has all your distaste for courts and salons, and is like a Pomeranian damsel with just a sufficient tincture of the great world. We walked to-day from seven to ten, over rocks and heaths, then I climbed alone about the cliffs laid bare by the ebb of the tide till after twelve, lay three hours lazily on the sofa, reading and dreaming; at three into the water, where I always feel that I should like to stay altogether; I stayed in over half-an-hour, and since have had the feeling that I only want wings to fly. After dinner we rode on the firm sand in the moonlight at the fall of the tide, and then I walked alone again. You see my old vigour is coming back to me, and I am full of gratitude to God. If I could only know that you are all well, and that I shall be able to get from here to Reinfeld without being hung up anywhere, everything would be delightful. It is ten now, and I am going to bed; shall get up at six and bathe twice to-morrow. I talk only of myself, as you see, like an old hypochondriac; but what else can I tell you of this place, except that air and water are like balm. May God keep you as well as I am! With heartiest love to all.

Your

v. B.

BIARRITZ, *August* 14, '62.

MY DEAR HEART,—To my great delight I at last received good news from you yesterday—your letter of the 9th to Paris. You will have seen in the meantime, from my letter, that I have followed your advice and Liepmann's* without knowing what it was, and have already been here eleven days, during which I have bathed fourteen times, besides

* The doctor at Stolp.

the four in Normandy and three in Spain, making twenty-one, and I shall probably bring it up to over thirty, as I am now bathing twice a day, first in the morning at seven, after which I walk till about ten, then breakfast, a few hours' siesta, and reading; at four another bath, and after dinner a long walk, with the sunset at sea and the moonrise over the Pyrenees; all this *à trois* with the Orloffs, since whose coming I have not been at all lonely. You remember your partiality for him, and I am now revenging myself a little with her, for I find her very attractive and charming. We three behave as if we were alone here. . . . Much love, and kiss all for me. God keep you as hitherto.

Your most faithful

v. B.

. . . I am rather ashamed at not having remembered our wedding-day, and Frau Orloff calls me *un monstre sans entrailles* on this account. But you know that, if my heart is weak as regards dates, it is not ungrateful, either for God's mercy or for your love and truth. There has been no change in us since our wedding-day, and I have never realised before that that was so long ago—five or six thousand happy days. May the Lord not consider how unworthy of them I am, and may He continue to pour out the fulness of His blessing upon us without regard to our deserts. Every year I make the same mistake of believing that we were married in August; July be it then; but anyway, it was a good month. I will write to our firstling the day after to-morrow.

Your

v. B.

Falaise de Goëlands, *August* 19, '62.

My dear Heart,—You will look in vain on all the maps for the place I date from above. About one mile

north of Biarritz is a narrow gorge in the bluff, grassy, bushy, shady, and out of sight; I see the sea between two heather-clad rocks, green and white, all foam and sun; beside me the most charming of all women, whom you will like exceedingly when you know her better. . . . Orloff is lying before us on the grass, smoking, she is writing to her mother, and I to you, my heart; you knew her slightly at Petersburg (*née* Troubetzkoy). Her parents live at Fontainebleau, and, when you meet her, you will forgive me for raving about her a little; she is full of originality, merry, wise, and sweet-tempered, young and pretty. I am writing on a book, under difficulties, sitting in the grass, under tamarinds. Am absurdly well, and as happy as I could be away from you dear ones. Monotonous country life, strolling among rocks, bushes, and heath. In a few days I must end this Robinson Crusoe existence, and find comfort in my sorrow at parting with this idealised Stolpmünde, the mighty ocean, and the charming Russians, in the thought that my face is set homeward. I am afraid I can do nothing for Klüber. If he had asked about six weeks earlier, I might have managed it. By the King's command, I got posts for two from the Emperor with great difficulty—Stein and Burg. The third, Walter Loe, he rejected decisively, in spite of representations on his behalf from our government, and he told me he could not send any more foreign officers to Mexico—they are very inacceptable to the staff (our two are the only ones so far); and also he had refused applications from hundreds of French officers, that it would make bad blood in the army, &c., &c. I cannot advise him to go to Mexico on his own account on leave; the French general would not accept him without a reference to the Emperor. It was a real godsend to me that the Orloffs came, about ten days ago, or I should have left, and should not have found the health and cheerfulness of former days in the sea again. Outside of my home—I will say outside of six persons in Reinfeld—I want not a jot or a tittle of anything, and I shall end by buying a holiday house here on the heath, where we will

spend our old age—eating peaches and muscatel grapes as if they were potatoes. Farewell, my heart; the wind is tearing my paper away from me, but it is a warm, mild wind. Love a thousand times over to parents and children.

Your most faithful

v. B.

BIARRITZ, *August* 22, '62.

MY HEART,—I cannot let our little daughter's birthday pass without writing to tell you how I have been drinking her health. First, this morning, in sea-water, for the warm waves were so powerful that, while rolling about in the sand, I took many a gulp of them; then in Madeira at breakfast; and then in the wonderfully soft, humid Atlantic air on a point of rock extending into the sea. After some hours of resting and writing letters to Paris and Berlin, I took my second drink of salt-water, this time in the haven, without any surf, but with plenty of swimming and diving; two surf baths in one day would be too much for me. Then I dined with Orloff, and the birthday children were toasted royally with good old Möet in Russian, German, and French. The other child was the sixty-year-old Matoéi Stepanitsch Wolkow, and his birthday was really yesterday, but it was kept to-day with Marie's. After dinner the Princess played me the "Winterreise" at the open window over the sea, and some Chopin; then we went—two ladies, three men, and several dogs—to the lighthouse crag, ensconced ourselves in the heather, and watched the stars, waves, and sea-gulls; the waves and the gulls we heard rather than saw, far below in the darkness, only now and again a wave flashed up to us in foam and lightning, or a gull skimmed by, chattering and screaming, probably attracted by the light of our cigars. I always go to bed at eleven, often earlier, and wake up, myself, about seven.

My bed is very indifferent; still I always have to fight against sleep before the "Amen," while my thoughts linger with you loved ones somewhat longer than my words. Keep on writing to Paris; much love to all

From your most faithful

V. B.

FALAISE, *August* 25, '62.

MY DEAR HEART,—I was delighted to get your letter of the 20th, yesterday, forwarded from Paris. As you are still anxious about my health (which you won't recognise at all when you see it!), I have asked Kathy,* the sweetest of women save one, to give me the enclosed certificate thereof. I am writing to you again in the open air, on the grass, as I did recently, in a warm still air, looking over the sea, which shows at its edge three white, leaping waves, but beyond these stretches out blue and smooth into space, with fishing-boats and little white sails on the horizon. . . . Yesterday we drove to Cambo, about fifteen miles from Bayonne, up the Nive, and spent the day in the mountains, a gorge like the valley of the Selke, called Pas de Roland, with a roaring mountain-stream, and ate ripe figs, plucked from the tree. On the ride home, wonderful sunset, Pyrenees aglow, and half Spain on fire the other side of the sea, then deep, very dark-blue, and fantastic sierras as in the Italian Alps. . . . The day after to-morrow the Emperor arrives; then the air of the court will pass through the crags and ravines, politics will mingle with the idyl, and a few days later I shall start back again, shall devote about a week to the Pyrenees, and then shall try to break through the barriers at Berlin, although the King, it seems, will not allow any pause in political work. If I have to stay dangling at the Hôtel Royal, then I can't help it, and must simply dangle. . . . But if I can manage to come and fetch

* Princess Orloff.

you, either to Berlin or Paris, I cannot endure the uncertainty through September; I would rather have you at Schönhausen. If you want to answer the Princess Orloff in a friendly way, write to her in German; she speaks it as well as we do, but prefers to write in French. Every day the Princess plays me the Mendelssohn pieces that the Bechers used to sing to us, and Beethoven, and the "Winterreise." She is a woman you will be enthusiastic about when you know her. Hearty love to little and big.

Your most faithful

v. B.

BIARRITZ, *August* 30, '62.

MY DEAR HEART,—I don't know whether this letter will be readable, for I am writing on a bare rock, with a newspaper for a pad; presumably our last breakfast here in the open air. We are sitting in a grotto which has an entrance from the land, and a vaulted opening to the sea, forty feet above the surf, and the rocky ceiling above us is twice as high. The eye strays over the wide sunlit sea, and over a dozen curious craggy islands, on which the sea breaks, booming: behind them Biarritz stretching out over fields and hills, and further and higher, the blue chain of the Pyrenees. A sturdy Taunus-like mountain, over Fuentarabia, holds the centre of the picture; to the right stretches the Spanish coast of St. Sebastian, Bilboa, ever a paler blue in the distance until it mingles with ocean. It would be difficult to make up a more charming, magnificent picture of sea, mountain, crag, city, and sunlight. The day after to-morrow the glory of this sea-side life will come to an end; to-morrow I take my last bath. I cannot thank God enough for the measure of health that I have found here, or be grateful enough that I did not go to Luchon, as the Parisian physician bade me: the springs there are very effective for gout and rheumatism, but the people that

I see here coming through from thence are as limp and run-down as any patient from Carlsbad who ought not to have gone there. At first I meant to stay one day only, then three; then I felt so well after every bath that I kept putting off my departure till the following day, no matter how bored I was, until the Orloffs came; since then I have had companions in my out-of-door life and in my enjoyment of nature, in respect of which the French and Spaniards are absolutely unimpressionable; they only care for dress and the casino, and my excellent Kathy wears such clothes that the Russian ladies don't even look at her; Aunty * at Reinfeld is certainly more elegant. But if she is careless in such matters she makes up for it by playing Beethoven to me every evening, and all the Bechers' Mendelssohn pieces of Frankfort days, and the Leiermann "Winterreise." I owe it to them that I have stayed here four weeks and got strong, otherwise I could never have endured the casino life and *table d'hôte* and French way of living. We dine together every day, mostly at the Orloffs, and I return their hospitality by little dinners in remote ravines and caves. If you were with us, you would find this life charming, and we could continue it a month longer. The bathing and the out-of-door life goes on to the 15th of November. The day after to-morrow morning we start together for Pau, make an excursion to Luchon to see the mountains, then go from Toulouse by rail to Avignon, where we separate; the Orloffs to Italy, I to Berlin; whether I shall go *viâ* Paris or direct by way of Geneva and Frankfort depends on letters from the Ministry, which I expect *en route*. The King's journey seems to have been entirely given up; I am glad not to have wasted my leave of absence in Berlin; as soon as that is over, it doesn't matter whether I get stuck fast in Paris or Berlin; indeed I should hope from B. to steal out to Reinfeld and to decide my fate at last, so that our goods and chattels may not become ice-bound at Bertheau's, and our eternal separation (almost four months) may have an end. May

* Fräulein von Reckow.

God unite us soon, in good health. I have been dawdling about as only an old house-dog of my species could do. But now I must get back into the home path. Hearty love to all.

Your most faithful

v. B.

CAUTERETS, *September* 2, '62.

MY BELOVED HEART,—The small size of this sheet means that I am very sleepy, and have to get up early to-morrow; but still I do not want to go to bed without sending you a sign of life, and thanking you and Marie for your last letters. We left charming Biarritz yesterday morning, restored in body and soul, and spent the night in Pau; this morning we had a fine view, somewhat veiled to be sure, but still wonderfully beautiful, from Henry IV.'s castle to the Pyrenees, and then we came here by way of Lourdes and Pierrefitte, through rocky vales, somewhat like the Jura at first, and then like the Italian slopes of the Alps in their wilder forms. . . . We all miss the sea-baths and sea-air; but as far as my health is concerned, I am an entirely different person; nevertheless, from the bottom of my heart, I am still ever and always your most faithful and now very weary

v. B.

BERLIN, *September* 21, '62.

MY BELOVED HEART,—I reached here yesterday morning, rather tired from the jolting of a train, which played ball with me from Paris to Cologne. This, however, I could have slept off, but I find myself in just the same situation here again as in May. Heydt and Bernstorff have asked for leave. H.'s application the King simply returned; what happened to the latter I don't know at all; I have not yet

seen the King. I shall merely ask his Majesty to permit me to go to Reinfeld to fetch my family and take them to Paris. If I have to enter on my duties here immediately, then I must first go to France, to present my letters of recall. If affairs here remain in uncertainty as they have hitherto, and I go back to Paris with no definite time fixed for the end of my mission there, then I believe that in a few weeks we shall move thither. I would then accept no position but that in Paris for the next six months. Our legation there has now become an embassy, and if you come you will be formally presented as Ambassadress before an empty throne, and will have to take part in all sorts of troublesome ceremonies besides, like Madame Montebello and Lady Napier. Much honour, little pleasure, yet on the whole things are much pleasanter than here. Yesterday morning, on arriving, I walked over to call on Roon, heard from him how matters stand, took coffee with the ladies, but was so shocked on glancing at the mirror, by the chimney-sweep complexion which twenty-five hours of coal-dust had laid on my face, that I took flight at once, bathed, slept two hours, and then paid a few ministerial and diplomatic visits. Hans came to see me before this, full of political schemes. I dined at five at Roon's, with Moritz, who has grown a perfect thicket of a beard, which draws his already heavy chin too low down on his shoulders for my artistic eye. He thought me as thin and sunburnt as if I had crossed the desert on a camel, but all agree with him that I look better than I have done for years. I passed the evening there; went to bed at eleven o'clock and slept until seven, had all sorts of dreams of southern skies, rocks, and fig-tree shades, till I awoke in the Wilhelmstrasse to the grey reality of a rainy autumn day. I must come to Reinfeld, and soon. I am getting melancholy here; rather at once into the Chamber, into strife and work, than lead this loafing life of hotel and visiting. I expect Roon back from Babelsberg at three, and hope for news of the King. I am going over to call on Schlözer at 60 Behrenstr., then on Schleinitz, and others. I hope a

letter from you is on its way, bringing me good news. Dearest love to all our belongings. Moritz tells me that Therese is with you, and that mother is better, thank Heaven.

Your most faithful

v. B.

BERLIN, *September* 24, '62.

MY BELOVED HEART,—I am a little anxious because I have not yet received a word from you. My Paris letter to mother and to you, in which I said I was coming here, must surely have reached you on Sunday, at latest, for it left Paris on Wednesday or Thursday. You will already have read of our bad luck in the papers. I have been appointed Minister, and provisional President of the Council until Prince Hohenzollern's resignation is accepted; then I shall become Prime Minister *de facto*, and later I am to take the Foreign Office. To-day I move over to No. 47, where Auerswald used to live. All this is not cheering, and I am terror-stricken about it every time I wake up in the morning. But it must be. I am in no condition to write you more than these lines now. I am besieged on all sides with business affairs of every kind, and cannot leave Berlin for the next few weeks. I must have your opinion as to whether we shall live at No. 74, or at the Foreign Office, No. 76, and as soon as the first rush is over, and we have a little peace, I will get you to come here. Then you can look about, and we will decide about our final installation with our children, goods and chattels. I have written to Bertheau, telling him to send everything off from Stettin at once. . . . Dearest love to parents and children, and give yourself into God's hands; this is no easy matter for me either. Above all, please write to me at once, if you have not done so already.

Your most faithful

v. B.

October 1, '62.

My dearest Heart,—Now for the first time I recognise the deep wisdom of the saying:

Des Morgens früh um Achte,
Wo noch niemand Böses dachte.*

I got up at seven, and have time at eight to send you two lines with my dearest love, for the world as yet leaves me in peace. The Lord has never yet forsaken me in an unexpected and unsolicited position, and my trust stands firm that He will not let evil come upon me in this, nor upon my health either. I sleep little, but feel well, ride every day on horses from the royal stables in the Thiergarten, and dine at Roon's, when I am not invited out. We cannot move in here until the Houses are dissolved, about the 15th. I could not endure the double confusion of the Chamber without and the moving within. As soon as our things from Petersburg arrive, I shall write asking you to come and stay here without unpacking for a few days, that we may talk over everything and see each other at last. Farewell, my heart, and do not be cast down. Dearest love.

Your most faithful

v. B.

(No date: probably *October* 12, '62.)

My Heart,—Please come now! We close on Tuesday, God willing; telegraph me from Cöslin the hour you will arrive, so that I can meet you. If you have found a good, respectable-looking servant, bring him with you. . . .

Your

v. B.

Come quickly, my angel!

* "In the morning at eight, when as yet none have thought of evil."

Friday.
(Postmark, BERLIN, *October* 24, '62.)

MY DEAREST HEART,—It is horribly empty here, and I am painfully homesick for you, and full of regret for the whilom consciousness that you were sitting in the little room near by, and that I could go to you if I would. I dined with the King and the Netherlands royalties, did not get a ride, and am writing letter after letter. For you only this hearty greeting and a sigh. I go on Monday to Paris. To-morrow three deputations again, and one Grand Duke. Much love to parents and children, and how about the fine horses?

Your most faithful

V. B.

PARIS, *November* 2, '62.

MY DARLING,—I cannot carry out your crinoline commission. Yesterday was All Saints' Day, to-day Sunday and All Souls'; all shops closed, and not a lady at hand who could give me information. . . . Yesterday I had a farewell audience at St. Cloud with Emperor and Empress, who expressed much affection and regret; calls and business all day long. I might have left this morning, but I want to rest a day longer, and am expecting the Orloffs to-day; I dine with them this evening. I leave to-morrow morning, reach Magdeburg Tuesday morning, shall go to bed there, and expect his Majesty at two o'clock; after dinner we go to Letzlingen, and are to have three fine days of forest and sport, and then back to the tread-mill. I shall be installed about the 8th. Lots of work is waiting for us! Do please do me the favour, I pray, of not fastening your letters right up to the top; I always have to tear them across, and read them piecemeal! The weather is foggy, oppressive, and not a bit pleasant for travelling; I should like to be on some bench by the stove, and not have to stir until the summer. Again this year I have covered more than ten thousand miles, and there is no saying

where my home is any more. In a fortnight, more or less, we shall all be together again, with God's help, and then I shall lock myself in with you, and shall never be at home to any one. Meanwhile give dearest love to parents and children.

Your most faithful

v. B.

CARLSBAD, *June* 24, '63.

MY BELOVED HEART,—You will have received my lines from Schwarzenberg to-day, and have been informed by telegram of my arrival here. The King is well, but it is getting difficult to keep his craving for business within the bounds necessary for the cure, and I fear that as the cure progresses he will want to work just as much as he is working now, and that will not do. I left Schwarzenberg to-day at seven ; beautiful scenery, fine weather, but cold ; cloak and plaid very useful. I am staying at the "White Lion" ; in front I look down on the market-place ; in the rear straight down into the water—I don't know what the thing is called—and across that at the big church ; on the right, into the King's windows, between them "Three Pheasants," "Swan," "City of Frankfort," &c. This will give you the bearings; the apartment is pretty; two storeys, airy. I dined with the King ; drank coffee on the lawn with Aug. Malzan, Perponcher, &c.; walked over the hills ; saw Nolde at the butts, and recognised most cordially a certain Baroness Scholl from Frankfort, whom I had absolutely forgotten ; the valley is beautiful, especially from above. Well, good-bye ; I must go to the King for tea. Dearest love to mother and the children.

Your most faithful

v. B.

Where did you stay here ?

Send me by the next courier some of my French visiting-cards with "Présid. du Conseil et Min. des A.-étr. de Sa M. le Roi de Prusse."

CARLSBAD, *June* 27, '63.

MY DARLING,—I received your undated letter yesterday. It would be very proper for you to pay your parting respects at Potsdam (Alexandrine, Queen Dowager, Crown Princess, Friedrich Carl). Write to the court ladies interrogatively, thus: "You are going for a few months into the country, and would Their Royal Highnesses be so gracious as to receive you to take leave?" I suppose it will not be possible for you to go with the Crown Princess, as she wants to leave on the 1st; and you cannot get off so soon, I expect, as our beloved mother will hardly feel well enough to travel. It won't really be very dreadful if you do not get to Potsdam. The box for the opera-hat must be there; it doesn't look like a hat-box, but is quite flat, and red. Farewell; God keep you and mother and children. I am going to walk for two hours. No assassins here; good police. The Emperor has given notice that he is coming; day still uncertain.

Your

v. B.

Please send me two dozen photographs of myself in plain clothes. I am in furious demand here, and am only to be had in uniform.

CARLSBAD, *June* 28, '63.

MY DEAR,— . . . I dined to-day with Helene,* whose very good cigar I am still smoking; Keudell, too; he must marry Rhaden's daughter. Apart from this, I didn't go out to-day at all, although the weather is charming, so I will rather think of you on top of the mountains than spill

* The Grand Duchess.

ink here any longer. Embrace the children for me, and may God protect you.

Your most faithful

v. B.

If there are any more photographs of me, send them; they are tearing off my coat-tails for them.

CARLSBAD, *July* 7, '63.

MY DEAR HEART,—This letter, I presume, will find you no longer in Berlin. I shall probably have news from you about this to-morrow. God grant you a safe journey, with all your goods and chattels (under which head I involuntarily include mother). . . . Disraeli is leader of the Conservative opposition in England, somewhat as Stahl is against the Auerswald Ministry, and he is also a baptized Jew, like Stahl.

Aunty has my warmest sympathy; it is worse to lose children than to die one's self, it is so contrary to the natural order of things. But however long the waiting, we shall follow them at last. . . .

NUREMBERG, *July* 19, '63.

MY DEAR HEART,— . . . Engel hasn't a clean shirt in the bag and the luggage is at the station, so that I am sitting here in my railway-dust and discomfort, waiting for a presumably bad dinner. I have no news of you since I left Carlsbad, of course, as letters have not been forwarded to me from there. With God's help, you will all be well. What shall I give Bill for his birthday? Travelling agrees with me splendidly; but it is very annoying to be gaped at like a Japanese at every station; it is all over with the incognito and its pleasures, until I pass out of ken, like "Fra Diavolo," and somebody else has the advan-

Von Bismarck.

ÆTAT 70

From a photograph by Mess[illegible]

tage of being the object of general ill-will. I should have liked very much to have gone *viâ* Vienna to Salzburg, where the King is to be to-morrow; I should have repeated our wedding journey; but political considerations forbade it, for people would have ascribed Heaven only knows what schemes to me, if I had arrived there simultaneously with the Russian replies. . . . Dearest love to old and young.

Your most faithful

v. B.

SALZBURG, *July* 22, '63, 6 A.M.

MY DEAR HEART,—I must send you the date at least from this charming little town, at the moment of leaving.

Gastein, 24th.—I wanted to send you some edelweiss with this letter, but I mislaid it at the Lueg Pass. . . . The King is well, but the affair of the Crown Prince is gnawing at his heart. Since the day I left Carlsbad, when a newspaper accidentally found its way into his hands with things in it which we had carefully kept from him, his good humour seems to be gone; he is quiet and brooding, and forces himself to be gay! It makes one's heart ache to see how he fights down his feelings, but likes to be alone. The exposure seems to have come entirely from Coburg. I am writing for the courier, and these words are only to say that I am well, and to carry you my fond love.

Your most faithful

v. B.

GASTEIN, *August* 2, '63.

MY DEAREST HEART,—I kept Bill's birthday in very fine weather, and announced it to the King, who inquired about the age and the industry of his godson. The Emperor

arrives to-day; everything is beflagged and begarlanded; the sun is shining, and I have not yet been out of my room, and have been writing for three hours, therefore only send you my fond love. If I do not send my letters *viâ* Berlin they fall into the hands of the post-office people here, and though I do not write any secrets, it is uncomfortable. The mare is back in Berlin. I bathe every day; it is pleasant, but very tiring.

Your most faithful

V. B.

GASTEIN, *August* 12, '63.

I am well, my heart, but overwhelmed with despatches from all directions. Yesterday, at a height of 7000 feet, I shot two chamois; to do it I had to sit three hours on the rocks in the burning heat, and was baked through in spite of the height. On the 15th we go from here to Salzburg, 16th Stuttgart, 17th Baden. I cannot leave the King, on account of the Frankfort windbags! H.R.H. here; leaves in half-an-hour; very friendly towards me, but relations rather strained above. Farewell! Zietel is urging me to close.

Your most faithful

V. B.

GASTEIN, *August* 14, '63.

DEAR HEART,—I send you this letter by post and one by courier at the same time, so that you may see which travels the fastest. . . . The King is well, but the baths try him a good deal. He bathes every day, and continues to work as at Berlin, and will listen to no remonstrances. God grant it may do him no harm! I am taking my last bath to-day,

and am well, but overwhelmed with work! . . . The enclosed lady, an American (North!) by birth, is very nice, and I devote the little leisure I have to her. I am so in request that I have little time for society. To-morrow evening we are to sleep at Salzburg, the 16th probably at Munich, the 17th at Stuttgart, Constance, or Baden. Write to Baden, where I shall probably stay for a few days. I have had a letter from Kathy, from Spa, and shall perhaps go to see her there; but who knows *ce qu'on devient* in a week, perhaps everything will be changed. Fond love to parents and children. I will write the next letter to Marie.

Your most faithful

v. B.

BADEN, *August* 28, '63.

MY DEAR HEART,—I received two letters from you the day before yesterday, and rejoiced greatly that the birthday had passed off happily, with God's blessing, which I further implore above all for the improvement of our dear mother's health. I long unspeakably to spend just one idle day among you all. Here, even in the finest weather, I can't keep my fingers free from ink! Yesterday I walked about in the fields in brilliant moonlight till midnight, but I can't banish business matters from my head. Nor is there anything really restful in the society here. The Obolensky is delightful to look at, but she *will* talk politics. With the Talleyrands my relations are, of course, always official; the Menschikoff, whom I like very much otherwise, has a train of unmannerly young fools always about her, who spoil my enjoyment of her society, and I find new acquaintances a great strain on me. All the Russians are very kind to me, but I really only feel quite comfortable with Gustav Alvensleben. I dined in my room yesterday with him and Eulenburg, who is here for two days. The King is well, but surrounded by intrigues. I dine with his Majesty

to-day. Schleinitz is here, Hohenzollern is expected, Goltz has gone to Paris. I think the King will leave on Sunday next at latest. I must be at Berlin a few days later, but perhaps I shall have time in the interval for a flying visit to Spa, where I should meet the Orloffs, or I may have to go with his Majesty to the Queen of England, whom the King wishes to visit at Rosenau, near Coburg, on the return journey. In any case, I hope to make a few days of leisure in September for a visit to Pomerania. I really wish some intrigue or the other would induce the King to form a new Ministry, so that I might honourably turn my back on this torrent of ink, and live quietly in the country. The disquiet of this life is unbearable. For the last ten weeks I have been a mere quill-driver, living at an inn! and in Berlin it will be the same thing. This is no life for an honourable Prussian noble, and I see a benefactor in every person who tries to compass my downfall! Then the flies are buzzing and tickling and stinging so in my room that I am earnestly longing for some change in my situation, which indeed will be vouchsafed me in a few minutes by the arrival of the train from Berlin, bringing a courier with fifty despatches, all about nothing! Best love to parents and children, from your enraged but most faithful

V. B.

BERLIN, *September* 15, '63.

MY DEAR HEART,—I have had a dream about you, not a bad one, but so vivid, and you looked so pale, that I feel a great longing for news.

The enclosed letter has come back to me from Reinfeld. I have written a cordial and grateful answer to the Crown Prince, and I think you ought to do something of the same sort to the Crown Princess, addressing yourself to Countess Hohenthal, much as I originally addressed myself to Schweinitz, though this form was not carried out, as Schweinitz

was away, and I therefore wrote direct to the Crown Prince finally.

Thank father for his letter. The work is killing—and the visitors—! Bernstorff is with me to-day, his wife too. Much love.

Your most faithful

v. B.

Bukow, *September* 21, '63.

My beloved Heart,—I wanted to write you a very comfortable, sensible letter on this last day of summer, and with this thought I lay down three hours ago on the sofa, but went to sleep and have just woke up, with only a quarter of an hour left before dinner, which is at six. I turned out at seven, rode uninterruptedly till half-past one, as "major," to see our brave soldiers burn powder and ride to the attack. At first I joined Fritz, who was commanding three regiments of cavalry; then I went over to the Garde du Corps, chased like mad over stock and stone, and have not passed such a pleasant day for a long time. I am living here next to the King and two adjutants, in a nice old house belonging to Count Flemming, the Ambassador and violoncellist: pretty country, with hills, lakes, and roads, and, above all, nothing to do, after finishing my business with his Majesty yesterday. I am sorry to say I must get back to the tread-mill to-morrow morning; and now to dinner, after having slept myself stupid and got a stiff neck from the ruggedness of the sofa. We have eighty persons at table, all sorts of foreign officers, some funny English, very nice Russians, and the whole wretched Diet.

I have no plain clothes with me, so have been all major for forty-eight hours. It seems to me all the time as if dear mother must be going to see this letter, and to rejoice that things are going well and peacefully with me; but

her large blue eyes are closed and her short little arm will not hold this paper up to them. My love to father and the children. I must dress.

Your most faithful

v. B.

BERLIN, *October* 16, '63.

MY DARLING,—Your letters of Monday and Tuesday, declaring yourself already pacified as regards the dreams, have just found me at breakfast. We did not go to Cologne for the 15th, because the union which had organised the *fête* had meanwhile issued a democratic electioneering proclamation. The King therefore refused to be brought into contact with it, and merely drove through Cologne on the 13th, while I came straight here, on business. The night you had such dreadful dreams I was at a party at the Stolypine's till two in the morning, where I heard Adlerberg sing, and then Viardot-Garcia, who sang to the four or five of us who had remained till late into the night, Russian and German songs, "Ich grolle nicht," &c. I saw no one but Struck at Frankfort, and came through quickly. Nothing unpleasant has ever been done to me at Cöslin, the railway officials at Belgard have been cashiered for not keeping order, and so all is well. On the 22nd I am going to Magdeburg with his Majesty, and on the 26th probably to Stralsund. Fond love.

Your most faithful

v. B.

BERLIN, *October* 21, '63.

MY BELOVED HEART,—Many thanks for your little circular letter which I have received and sent off. I have

just come in from riding; glorious, still, mild autumn air. I expect Keudell, Zietel, and others to dinner at five; meanwhile I am writing you a word, because I am going to Magdeburg to-morrow with his Majesty to the dedication of the Cathedral, and shall not be able to write. If father feels your going away on the 27th very much, leave me alone another week or so; I shan't get away from my work-room and the sessions of the Ministry, anyway, while the Chamber is opening. I shall be heartily glad if you come earlier, but will not be selfish to our lonely old father. I am very well, but am getting buried deeper and deeper in documents. Hearty love to father and children.

Your most faithful

v. B.

I have had a terribly sad letter from Canitz! I don't want at all to send it to you, and don't know how to answer it.

BERLIN, *October* 27, '63.

MY HEART,—It is bitterly cold, but I am well. Have you begun fires yet at Reinfeld? I hope so; we did here a week ago. I was sitting alone with Keudell in the blue salon yesterday after dinner, and he was playing, when I got your Sunday letter. Truly you wrote in a fine holiday mood! Trust in God, my heart, and in the saying that barking dogs do not bite. I did not escort the King to Stralsund, as it is a very fatiguing trip, which would have thrown me back two days in my work. His Majesty is here again this evening; the threats against his life are far more to be feared than those directed against me, but this, too, is in God's hand only. Do not let worry spoil the last fine days for you, and when you do start on your journey, send some

woman or other ahead to arrange things here as you wish them. I must to work. Farewell, with much love.

Your most faithful

v. B.

Only about thirty-eight degrees to-day, and glistening sun. This * has been sent me twice anonymously from different directions.

BABELSBERG, *November* 1, '63.

MY BELOVED HEART,—I am taking advantage of a moment, while waiting here for the King, who is dining at Sans Souci, to write you two words, as I used to do from Zarskoe or Peterhof. Only to say that I am well and am heartily glad that I am now so soon to see you holding sway again in the empty Berlin rooms. The Diet opens on the 9th with all its torments; but I expect to go on the opening day to Letzlingen with his Majesty, and to spend two days in the woods. During that time I hope you will get through the hammering and hauling necessary to your moving in, my love, and then on my return I shall find everything in order.

I have been living and working entirely by myself lately, have eaten alone generally, and have not left the house except to ride; quiet and angry; now and then a council of Ministers. These will be held every day this week, I suppose, in view of the dear Chambers, and after the King has been a week in Stralsund and Blankenburg, and we have laid up plenty of stores! I hear the rolling of his carriage now and must close. With hearty love to father and the children.

Your most faithful

v. B.

* Psalm xci. in a feminine handwriting enclosed.

CARLSBAD, *July* 1, '64.

MY DEAR HEART,—I seize these free moments to write to you, though my letter will not leave till to-morrow. I have been taking a long afternoon walk over the Jägersaal to the Aberg, back on the other side of the mountain through Telpthal, three hours in the rain and a shooting-coat, lonely and slowly, though at last I came upon a rain-bound Russian, the Countess Tolstoy, till when I had seen not a human soul, only firs, beeches, and thrushes in the gentle downpour. Meanwhile I had had my quarters removed from the ground floor, where I have been too cold in the continuous bad weather, to a pleasant *bel étage*, with my table in a corner between two windows. On the left I look along the old meadow, to the right into the narrow Marktgasse, and beyond on to the Tepl. The house is called the "Three Larks," and a fourth, Jenny Röder, is making music over my head. Röder will probably become our envoy at Cassel, Reuss will go to Brussels, Schulenberg to Dresden, Canitz to Stuttgart, Wentzel to Darmstadt, Pirch to Weimar, Heydebrand to Athens. Roon and Eulenburg have gone back to Berlin this afternoon, and the inclination to assemble the Landtag has been suppressed. That would have been the last straw ! in the very middle of the summer. I was half tempted to accompany them (the Ministers), and to telegraph to you to expect me to-morrow. But the King put on such a face of woe at my half-laughing suggestion of the idea, that I could not make up my mind to do it. Arrangements for travelling are so defective, that one can never get to Berlin or back from here in one day. So I could not have done it without being absent for five days, if I had spent only twenty-four hours at Berlin, and then I should have had to leave directly I began to enjoy myself. I am very sorry, on account of you and of Kathsch ; but, of course, things might easily happen in five days that would require my presence with his

Majesty. I have telegraphed to the Orloffs, saying I could not be absent for more than two days, and asking them if we shall meet at Schwarzenberg or Altenburg. I could manage the first easily, and the second with a little exertion. If they cannot manage this, I am very sorry, but as long as I am the servant of the public weal I must do what I must. Why did you have the children's teeth filed so much. Stopping was all very well, but I am alarmed at the filing, and it sets all my nerves on edge even here! Eulenburg, who arrived here much shattered by a financial dinner, brought me good news of you and the children, and I received your last letter with the same yesterday morning. Thanks be to God, and may He continue to guard you! These lines will find you at Kröchlendorf, if you keep to your plans. So give my best love to the Arnims; I wrote to Malle a few days ago. The King is well. A taste of the cup of victory has done more for him than all his draughts of the Sprudel! We are one, heart and soul, with Austria, France, and Russia, and are toasted with good wishes, amidst smiles that are perhaps a little "yellowish," as the Frenchman says. May God's support continue with us! Prince Frederick Charles is insupportable again with his meagre despatches. We get fuller reports by way of Vienna and Copenhagen than from him. In reply to the King's telegram asking for details, he sent an answer containing only recommendations of certain of his favourites for orders and distinctions, and we do not know even now, how and where we got over, how many and whom we have lost, how many prisoners there are, and whether or how the Danes have embarked.

July 2nd.

Your letter received. Poor Puss has my heartiest sympathy for the tortures she so bravely endured from the dentist. Kathsch is not coming, and I shall stay quietly here.

Your most faithful

v. B.

CARLSBAD, *July* 8, '64.

MY BELOVED HEART,—I have received your Kröchlendorf letter with thanks, and the courier gives me a few minutes to write, after finishing my official letters. I am going to use them to complain of the weather; it rains day and night, and is so cold that I have had to have my rooms heated every morning for four days; all the world is catching cold. I have such a bad one that I can't see out of my eyes—catarrh, as the book calls it. . . . I found a splendid pretext for shaking off King Otto, from whom I am never safe when I go out to walk; hereafter I shall make the most of it. Lauer had to declare, in his medical capacity, that I must do very little talking, and thus I keep clear of all conversation. . . . I associate with nobody at all here; since the Stolypin woman took advantage of a rainy walk over the hills, which I was foolish enough to take with her, and abused it for political purposes from beginning to end, I trust nobody, but sneak through covered paths towards the less reputable side (Eger Valley), and away, where one meets only peasants, and I climb up undiscovered mountains through pathless gorges! And still this didn't prevent me from meeting Sigmund Arnim in the heart of the woods, on a spot where I had never seen any one with gloves before; and, of course, he accompanied me for two hours, as he couldn't find his way home without me! Pardon this torn sheet. I began writing on it to Eulenburg. Dearest love to all of you, especially father.

Your most faithful

v. B.

CARLSBAD, *July* 17, '64.

MY LOVE,—I might repeat my last letter to-day. I worked till about six, then climbed into the mountains, and walked without a halt to the present moment, when, after returning to the town, and past your "King of England" in the mild moonlight, I am signing half-a-dozen despatches in haste, and scribbling a few lines to you, my heart. You see I have got rid of my catarrh; it went away with the bad weather. Gortchakoff left early this morning! No end of work! We shall probably have an armistice of ten days with the Danes, perhaps even peace. If the latter, I shall be obliged to stay a few days at Vienna, whence I should go as from here to join the King again at Gastein. His Majesty will probably leave here on Wednesday, arriving at Gastein on the 25th *viâ* Regensburg and Salzburg. I shall take Keudell and Abeken too with me to Vienna, if we treat with the Danes. . . .

Your most faithful

v. B.

CARLSBAD, *July* 20, '64.

MY BELOVED HEART,—The King has just left for Marienbad; rows of lovely women with enormous bouquets, which filled his carriage to overflowing; much hurrahing and emotion. The place will seem rather empty to me now; all my acquaintances gone, too, except Abeken and Keudell. They are dining now; I have done so already—with the King. He thanked me, in saying goodbye, and was much moved, and gave me all the credit for the good that with God's help has come to Prussia. May God preserve us, continue mercifully to guide us,

and not leave us to our own blindness. In this calling one truly learns that one may be as clever as the cleverest of this world, and still may go into the next moment as a child into the dark. Well, I am off to Vienna to-morrow morning; we spend the night at Prague; perhaps we may have peace with the Danes in a week; perhaps war still next winter. I shall make my stay in Vienna as short as possible, so as not to lose too many baths at Gastein. After that I shall, I suppose, go to Vienna again with his Majesty; thence to Baden; then the Emperor of Russia is coming to Berlin, at the beginning of September. Before that no prospect of rest, if then.

Interruption after interruption! And now it is five, and at six Itzenplitz, and then Helene, and then the mail goes out. So farewell, my heart; I want to walk for an hour now, the first time to-day. God be with you all.

Yours,

v. B.

VIENNA, *July* 22, '64.

MY DEAR HEART, — I left Carlsbad early yesterday morning. . . . I am staying with Werther, whose wife is not here; meanwhile I have seen nobody but Rechberg — have had a letter from Motley. The rain kept me at the Volksgarten for two hours, listening to the music; the people looked at me as though I were a new rhinoceros for the zoological garden, for which I sought consolation in some very good beer. I can't tell yet how long I shall stay here. A great many calls to make to-morrow; dine at Rechberg's, in the country; then, if possible, conclude peace with Denmark, and flee in all haste into the mountains of Gastein. I wish it were all over and done. The two days of travel have rested me a little, mentally, but physically I am very tired, and bid you good-night. God keep you and all who are under the Reinfeld roof.

You will, perhaps, have this letter on Monday evening; so send your next letter here.

Your most faithful

v. B.

VIENNA, *July* 27, '64.

MY BELOVED HEART,—I have had one letter from you here, and am longing for a second. I am leading a laborious life — four hours daily with unmanageable Danes, and not yet through. It must be settled by Sunday, whether it is to be war or peace. I dined with Motley yesterday; a very agreeable wife; has evidently been a beauty; two nice daughters; the oldest and handsomest has gone visiting in America. We drank a great deal, were very merry—which he is not often now, as the war weighs on his mind. He has grown gray, and has cut his hair short. After the conference to-day, I dined with the Emperor at Schönbrunn, took a stroll with Rechberg and Werther, and thought of our moonlight expedition. I spent an hour in the Volksgarten, not incognito, I am sorry to say, as I was seventeen years ago, but stared at by all the world. The band of a Hungarian regiment played a Prussian air in my honour, and the conductor expressed Prussian sympathies to me in broken German. The Prussian tune again while we were leaving; very well meant of the moustachios, with their narrow blue trousers; but this existence on the stage is very uncomfortable when one wants to drink a glass of beer in peace. I hope to go to Gastein on Saturday, whether there is peace or not. It's too hot for me here, especially at night. Kurt* has just come in with a lot of signatures, and so I bid you good-night, with love a thousand-fold.

Your most faithful

v. B.

Official of the Chancellory.

GASTEIN, *August* 6, '64.

MY BELOVED HEART,—The work is more and more overwhelming, and I don't see at all how I am going to get time for it here, where I do nothing in the morning after my bath. To-day is the first time since my arrival on the 2nd, in a storm with hail as big as bullets, that I have managed to take just a good hour's walk in glorious weather. Returning, I wanted to make use of half-an-hour to write to you, but in walks Abeken with drafts and telegrams, and now I have to go to the King. I dine and take tea and drive every day with his Majesty; it is all very pleasant, and I am glad to see the King so well, and in such good spirits, but the time, the time! Still, I am wonderfully well. I have taken four baths, but shall scarcely manage fifteen, as the King leaves on the 15th. I have been very comfortably installed since yesterday, when a large, cool, corner room with a splendid view became vacant; before this, I had a perfect oven, during the day at least; the nights are deliciously fresh. The King will probably go from here to Vienna by short stages *viâ* Ischl, and thence to Baden. I am not certain whether I am to accompany him in the last expedition. I still hope to get a few free days for peaceful Pomerania. But what is the use of making plans, when something always happens to upset them. I shall want more uniform for Vienna, and no one will be able to find it. I have not a gun either, and every day there is chamois-stalking. However, up to the present I have had no time for sport. To-day seventeen were shot, and I was not of the party! My life is like Leporello's—peace neither by day nor night, and nought that gives my heart delight! Farewell, my heart, God guard you. Write! With much love.

Your most faithful

V. B.

SCHÖNBRUNN, *August* 20, '64.

MY BELOVED HEART,—It is most remarkable that I happen to be quartered in those very rooms, on the ground floor, opening into the private garden into which we intruded by moonlight almost exactly seventeen years ago. Looking over my right shoulder, I see through a glass door along the dark path hedged with beeches by which, with a secret enjoyment of the forbidden, we wandered up to the glass windows behind which I am living. This was then one of the Empress's apartments, and I can now repeat that former stroll of ours, by moonlight, in greater comfort. . . . The Empress is a most lovely woman, of whom all her portraits give a very false idea. We are to stay here three days, and I cannot yet say what is to follow, Baden or Pomerania. I am thoroughly sleepy ; wish you and all the family good-night.

Your most faithful

V. B.

BADEN, *September* 1, '64.

MY BELOVED HEART,—Yesterday I received Bill's letter with your postscript, and am awaiting a telegram about your condition with some anxiety, for you would not lightly report yourself ill, and you must be seriously unwell to have consented to lie up. May God help you speedily and completely. I can hardly expect an answer before evening, since, there being no telegraph open at night, my despatch only went off at seven this morning. Please make the children write every day, and fully, or I shall have no peace. It is now nearly four o'clock, and I hope the messenger with the answer is already in sight of

the towers of Stolp. The King came to-day from Mainau, well and in good spirits, and drove to the races with the Queen in the rain. Her Majesty received me very graciously the day before yesterday, and talked of politics of every sort. I am staying at the Villa Stadtelhofer, on the hill above the Lichtenthal avenue, as there was no room in the town. I look out through the open window before me upon the old castle, the rocks beside it wreathed in mists, and the Mercury with its top invisible, the whole through a veil of rain drawn across the warm air. The outlook over town and mountains is charming, but the weather, homesickness, and anxiety for you make me sad; besides, I am to dine at six with Princess Anna; Prince and Princess Carl are here; Flemming lodges over me, scrapes his violoncello, the Countess sings, and Keudell accompanies her. Abeken's busy hand is constantly showering on me a new store of scribbled drafts as soon as I have laboured through the old ones. I do not recall where I wrote to you last. All the way from Vienna here I have not had time to reflect. I slept one night at Salzburg, the next at Munich, talked much and long on business with Schrenk, who has become very thin, and is now our friend, and Beust's enemy; then I slept at Augsburg, came thence by way of Stuttgart hither, hoping to pass the two days before the King came in restful idleness, but was only able to stroll in the forest for two hours yesterday morning. Couriers, inkstand, audiences, and visitors whirled about me ceaselessly. Uexküll, too, is here, Chreptowisch lodges next to me, and I dare not show myself on the promenade; nobody leaves me in peace. Hearty love to our father and the children, and, above all things, get well, and write me at once how you are, for the telegram will give me but monosyllabic news.

Your most faithful

v. B.

BADEN, *September* 5, '64.

What has really been the matter with you, my angel? Praise and thanks to God that you are better; I was deeply distressed, and the telegraph was so slow in response to my first inquiry that I still feel oppressed; it was almost forty hours after the question that the answer came. But what was the cause of the sickness? Have you suffered from annoyances, anxiety, exertion, or did the evil fall on you suddenly when quite well? Your nerves have never given you trouble before, and it is strange that they should suddenly become so threatening! I am strongly inclined to lay the blame on doctors, mineral waters, and drugs. Only keep quiet and rely on the recuperative force of your constitution and of rest.

I work, and walk about among the hills; for two days I have not gone down into the town at all, only seeing it from the window. In three or four days I shall probably start for Berlin. Hearty love.

Your most faithful

v. B.

FRANKFORT, *September* 11, '64.

MY DEAR HEART,—It is long since I have written to you from here. . . . The King has gone to Jugenheim to the Emperor Alexander, after which he is to visit the Empress Eugenie at Schwalbach, and I have arranged for a free day at Frankfort, which I am going to spend at Heidelberg with Kathy (Orloff), whom I met very unexpectedly last evening. I shall accompany her to Heidelberg, returning here about two or three, in time to devote myself to the Diet. Early to-morrow I am off to Berlin, whence, after the necessary

wrangling with Ministers, I shall start for Pomerania, to have a look at my love again. We had a violent storm here last night; to-day it is raining. Have you got the rye all in? Much love and many thanks to father for his careful report.

Your

v. B.

BERLIN, *September* 30, 1864.

After a very vexatious morning, to be followed presently by a Roon dinner, and an evening session of the Ministry, only two lines of love and greeting. A remnant of hypochondria betrays itself through the splendid news of your health, in your lament over the matter of expense; and if this were an hundred-fold greater, you must not let your gratitude and joy for your recovery be troubled by it. Did the grapes from Borchardt arrive in good condition? I have commissioned him to send a little box every other day; they are very good—from Fontainebleau. If they are spoilt when they reach you, cancel the order; otherwise not; they will certainly be good for you. I shall probably go to Baden to-morrow evening or early next day. Whether from thence to Biarritz will then be decided. I shall take a passport with me, but whether the journey will be made, God knows.

Your most faithful

v. B.

BADEN, *October* 3, '64.

MY LOVE,—God grant that your recovery has proved as permanent as, to my gratitude and joy, it appears from the two letters which reached me in Berlin to have been

complete. I am a little uneasy at your having written the first long letter yourself; do not presume too much on your strength, but call in the children; if you were able to write it without being worn out, it certainly denotes great progress. It is distressing that Aunty must leave you. I have begged Jenny to hasten her return. Can you not have another friend with you, some lady of the neighbourhood? Or keep one of the children always at hand; let them read to you; this is good practice for them; whether they miss lessons in consequence matters little in this case. I arrived here yesterday, expecting to go to Biarritz to-morrow, but must delay at least one day, as the Empress Eugénie is coming here to-morrow. I have been confirmed in my purpose from several quarters, even if I take only fourteen baths. Goltz has just come from Biarritz, stout and hearty as I have never seen him. He says that as soon as he had taken three baths he felt like another man, and kept improving all the time he was there; he had warm weather throughout, while here it is as cold as it was and is in Pomerania—frost at night, and I have fires. But I am likely to have a struggle with his Majesty yet about the journey, which I am this moment going to meet. . . . In Berlin I dined at Roon's one day, at Mühler's another. Frau Mühler is pretty well again; her illness was very like yours, save that in your case, thank God, there are no complications from pains in the head. Frerichs prescribes iron for her, too, also ferruginous baths, and very strong broth. Commending you all to God's gracious protection.

Your most faithful

v. B.

BADEN, *October* 4, '64.

MY DEAR HEART,—I found the King so much inclined to favour my trip to Biarritz to-day that I seized the opportunity at once, and start to-morrow morning. . . . May

God only grant that your recovery goes on steadily. That will do me as much good as the sea-bathing. I have still much packing and writing to do; have just come from the castle, where Eugénie is. It is twelve o'clock; I must rise at five.

Your most faithful

v. B.

BORDEAUX, *October* 6, '64.

. . . It seems like a dream to be here again. I left Baden early yesterday morning, slept very well in Paris, started again about eleven this morning, and now at eleven in the evening I am here, and intend to go to Bayonne at eight to-morrow, so as to arrive at Biarritz at two. It was still cold in Paris, and at Baden yesterday morning there was a hoar frost. This side of the Loire things were better, and here it is decidedly warm, warmer than any night we have had this year. I am really quite well already, and should feel very cheerful, if I could be certain you were the same. I think it is all nonsense forbidding you to eat grapes. It can only have been because of the iron tonic. When in Paris I felt a great desire to live there again. He (Goltz) has arranged the house very nicely, and I really lead the life of a convict in Berlin as compared with the independence of a post abroad. If it suits me, I shall take about fifteen baths, and start on my return journey on the 21st or 22nd. Please God you will then have arrived at Berlin too, or perhaps a little earlier.

Senfft sends you a pressing invitation to stay the night at his house at Stettin, with all your belongings. He says you need see no one but his wife, and that there is plenty of room at the Schloss. You need only let them know a day beforehand. Do as you like; Truchot's is not very comfortable. I am longing for news, as the last at Baden was not quite so good as before. Do not exert yourself in any

way, not even to write. Let the children do this for you. Fond love.

Your most faithful

v. B.

BIARRITZ, *October* 7, '64.

Here I really am, my heart—it seems like a dream; the sea before me, Kathsch at work on Beethoven overhead, such a sky as we have not had the whole summer, and no ink in the house! In Paris, yesterday, we still had fires; here I had to put on summer clothing at once, which I had not expected to do again this year. . . . It is all very fine, if I only had news that you are well. I will not do any work at all; if despatches are sent me, I will retire into the Pyrenees, to Itzazu. I am just going to take my first bath; the water is at seventy degrees, the air at least eighty-eight degrees. Hearty love.

Your most faithful

v. B.

BIARRITZ, *October* 9, '64.

MY ANGEL,—I think I won't buy Lubben,* but instead, Ishoux, or something near Dax. When I think how we kept our fires going at Baden, and even in Paris, and how the sun wheedles off our overcoats and cloth trousers here, how we sat by the sea in the moonlight till ten o'clock last night, and breakfasted out of doors this morning, and how I am writing to you now at an open window, looking out at the blue sunlit sea, and the crowd of bathers who are wandering about on the beach with bare feet and the scantiest raiment, I am bound to say that God has shown a

* An estate near Reinfeld.

marvellous grace to the Southerner in the gift of climate. I am content with one bath a day at present, but shall go on to two presently, perhaps even to three, *à la* Zanthier. I take my meals with the Orloffs, a cousin of hers, Hamburger, and an Englishman named French, whose wife is a Russian. News of you is all I want to make me comfortable. I received your last letter at Baden on the 4th; on the 5th I left for Paris. God grant that you are well, and that I may soon learn it. If we were free agents, I would ask you to come here with all our belongings, and spend the whole winter, as many English people do on account of the cheapness of everything here in the winter. . . . Farewell, much love.

Your most faithful

v. B.

BIARRITZ, *October* 11, '64.

At last the mail has brought me your letter of the 5th, after I have been for several days in real distress for want of it. Letters from Berlin usually reach here in two days. I am glad that Liepmann, at least, thinks you better, but it is a pity you do not feel so yourself. How do you eat and sleep? This will give the surest measure of your progress. I reproach myself for not having remained with you, for certainly separation has a disturbing effect upon your nerves, but it will be a consolation to you that, with God's help, I am going to get completely well again here. I have to-day taken my sixth bath since the 7th, when I began, and now I take two every day, feeling light and strong after each. In the intervals we stroll about on the shore, reading and writing on the rocks over the water—in short, an absolutely idle life. I am so accustomed to writing all day that this utter idleness gives me a very bad conscience. The day before yesterday I received a cipher despatch from the King, and yesterday I spent an hour

dictating the answer to Bölsing (the deciphering secretary), who is with me; apart from this, I do absolutely nothing but lounge and eat when not asleep. . . .

Please do not stop the grapes—have plenty of them. I firmly believe that they do you more good than the poisonous concoctions from the drug-shop. I send a few postage-stamps from to-day's mail for the children. . . . May God of His mercy relieve you speedily of your sickness, and give us all a happy reunion—I hope in about a fortnight. Farewell, my angel; love to old and young. I am now going to dinner, seven o'clock, but we breakfasted heartily at eleven.

Your most faithful

v. B.

BIARRITZ, *October* 17, '64.

MY BELOVED HEART,—I wrote despatches all day yesterday, and to make up for this, I am going to drive to Cambo, miles from here among the mountains, near Izazu. I am only sending you a few hasty words to say that I am well, that I am going to take my twelfth bath to-day, that I hope to get in fifteen by the 17th, and that, with God's help, I shall be at Berlin about the 25th. How are you getting on, my poor love, and will you be able to travel? Herbert's letter of the 12th, which arrived yesterday, speaks of bad appetite, and of assafœtida. Throw the stuff away, if it disagrees with your stomach; no apothecary can give you a substitute for food. I am very much afraid that, with the best intentions, the two doctors give you too much physic.

I am very well, though the east wind that has been blowing for the last four days makes the nights cold. One forgets it by day in the glow of sunshine, but our moonlight walks have come to an end, brilliant though the evenings are. The water is still at 57 degrees, and does me a great deal of good. Kathsch is as merry as a student,

and sends her kindest love to you. They are going to Spain from here next week, and do not return to Brussels till December. . . . If you could be with us, well and cheerful, how you would enjoy the sea and mountains, my dearest! God grant that we may soon meet in health, if without mountains, in the Wilhelmstrasse! May His help be with you, and His protection over all Reinfeld. Farewell.

Your most faithful

v. B.

Itzazu, *October* 17, '64.

My Heart,—I have already sent you a letter by the courier this morning, but *pour la rareté du fait* I must write to you from this magic place. We have breakfasted here, fourteen miles east of Biarritz, among the mountains, and are sitting in a charming summer atmosphere on the bank of a murmuring stream, whose name we cannot discover, because nobody speaks French, but only Basque; high narrow rocks before and behind us, with all sorts of heather, ferns, and chestnut-trees. The valley is called Le Pas de Roland, the western edge of the Pyrenees. Before starting, we took our bath; the water was cold, the air like July; I despatched the courier, then a charming drive through mountains, forests, and meadows. After eating, drinking, and climbing ourselves tired, we five are sitting, Orloff and French reading aloud together, Kathsch, Mlle. de Meynard, and I writing, I on the lid of the box which held the grapes and figs we have devoured. At five we drive, by sunset and moonlight, to Biarritz, and dine at eight. It is too pleasant a life to last, and I am distressed to enjoy it all without you, and cannot wish it to last longer, because it keeps me from you. They are acting foolishly at Berlin, and I have already threatened to go to Spain with Orloff if they will not be reasonable. Bodel

and Itz* seem half demented, under the direction of all sorts of privy-councillors, Delbrück included.

The 20th.

The day before yesterday evening the Orloffs went to Pau to visit the Panins; I went with them, and came back yesterday. It was oppressively close there; thunder-storms and showers in the evening while we were on the railway; we drove from Bayonne here, the sea beautiful. After being as calm as a duck-pond for several days, with the land breeze, to-day it looks like a boiling cauldron. But with it all the wind is soft and moist, sun and rain alternately—real Atlantic weather. I take my fourteenth bath to-day; I shall hardly go beyond the fifteenth, for it seems likely that I shall have to leave this warm coast to-morrow. I do not wish to pass through Paris if the Emperor is not there, and his Majesty will probably go to Nice on Sunday to visit all the Reusses. To await his return would throw my plans out too much, and my conscience would be troubled at the long absence from Berlin. I am still struggling between duty and inclination, but the former, I fear, will prevail. I will first take my bath, and then decide whether there shall be only one more. In any case, the fortnight here has done me much good, and I only wish I could transplant you hither or to Pau, without the fatigue of the journey, then I am sure you would gain strength rapidly. Your winter landscape of the 15th, which reached me yesterday, has really frightened me. Did you ever get a letter of the 6th from me, written at Bordeaux? God help you to speedy and full recovery.

Your most faithful

v. B.

* Bodelschwingh and Itzenplitz.

PARIS, *October* 25, '64.

Before going to bed after an exhausting day, I must report my safe arrival here. Yesterday noon I left dear Biarritz; mowers were in the meadows as I drove away under a hot sun; friendship escorted me to Bayonne; at six this morning I arrived here; much politics, an audience with the Emperor and Empress at St. Cloud, calls, dinner with Drouyn de Lhuys, and now I am going to bed tired out. God be with you and all Reinfeld.

Your

v. B.

BERLIN, *October* 30, '64.

MY BELOVED HEART,—My joy in being a thousand miles nearer you, and my hopes of speedy reunion, were clouded last evening on my arrival by your letter of the day before, which was less reassuring than either of the two I received in Paris from you and Herbert. I had firmly hoped that I should find you here already without notice, for on the journey I read in a Hanover newspaper that you had arrived in Berlin; and now I find you are not at all well, my poor darling, and again tortured by the saddest thoughts. I constantly reproach myself that I have not been with you instead of at Biarritz; you would surely have been stronger by this time, and, in any case, full of confidence. I would gladly fetch you now, but the accumulated arrears of business overwhelm me so, that last night, after my arrival, I sat up till two, and to-day get my first chance of writing to you at midnight. For at least three hours I was busy signing my name, and reports in abundance, for the King. Gortchakoff was

waiting here for me, and all possible ambassadors. The treaty of peace with Denmark was signed to-day, but now the negotiations as to what is to be done with the Duchies are just beginning in earnest. In addition to all this there is the tariff business, over which I am greatly at odds with certain colleagues; I shall perhaps fall out with them entirely, and then all the preparations for the precious Chamber! They say here that I have wholly recovered my health and am thinner and stronger, but they will soon take it out of me again. The weather in Paris, as it seems to me from here, was still very mild, only it rained; at Cologne it was very cold; here it is fine and wintry to-day without snow. I was at Essen, at Krupp's cannon foundry, half a day, as I heard that the King would not come from Blankenburg till to-day; in the four weeks they have deprived him, too, of a portion of health. May God but lend an ear to prayer, and give you yours again, so that we may lead a happier life together than this now is. As soon as I have you here, you will recover strength and spirits; the very change of air will do you good. How did the driving out affect you? Can you think without dread of a drive to Stolp? You could stop one night there, the next at Cöslin, and another at Stettin. I can fetch you, I hope, there or at Cöslin. God grant it may be soon!

Your most faithful

v. B.

BERLIN, *November* 2, '64.

MY DEAR HEART,—Since I have been here the waves of affairs have closed over my head, and I am keeping the folks waiting in the anteroom while I write you two or three hurried lines. Is there more hope of your being able to travel, or is it still uncertain? This, for the moment, is the most momentous question of state! The weather is cold,

though sunny; the thermometer registers 28 degrees at present. Perhaps, as is often the case in nervous complaints, you are less susceptible to this than to damp weather. God grant it, for it is hardly probable that we shall have a return of mild weather so late in the year. Your furs are packed, and shall be sent off to-day. They are quite indispensable now, and only a week ago I was trying to find a shady spot! The Grand Duchess Helene sends kindest remembrances to you, Fraulein Rhaden, and many others the same. We expect the Emperor Alexander to-day; to-morrow there is a shooting-party at Grunewald, which I am unable to join, for lack of a red coat. On Saturday we shall perhaps go to Setzlingen, if the Emperor can stay so long. Yesterday I dined here alone with Keudell; every other day at court.

God grant us a speedy reunion, and help you soon and effectually to throw off your languor. Fond love.

Your most faithful

v. B.

BERLIN, *November* 3, '64.
Or rather, *November* 4, 1 A.M.

MY HEART,—As I shall have no opportunity of writing from Letzlingen to-morrow or the next day, I will tell you to-night, or rather this morning, that I am well, and that I earnestly long for you. I have done two unwonted things to-day: joined the hunting party in the Grunewald, in which I was among the first at the death, and played whist, at which I won ten reichsthaler and eighteen silver groschen from the Czar, then supped at Adlerberg's, whence I have just returned to go to bed, as we start for Letzlingen at seven. Love to father and the children, and God make you well speedily, my darling.

Your most faithful and very tired

v. B.

BERLIN, *November* 14, '64.

MY BELOVED HEART,—I was in fine spirits a little while ago, as the treaty of peace has actually been completed, and several other matters settled as I wished. The King had just left me; had signed the treaty in my office; given me the order of the Black Eagle, and, what pleased me more, had embraced me very warmly; and I was saying that just at that time the day after to-morrow I should be reunited to you here, and meanwhile, to-morrow, should shoot many pheasants, when in came the little bird of ill omen, Jenny, and told me, to my terror, that on Friday you had had a relapse, and afterwards had felt very weak again. I am in deep anxiety and distress at this, and my hope revives only at the thought that I have as yet had no telegram giving up your journey, so that you must still feel strong enough to travel. Your latest letters were so favourable—the very last, of Friday, at least did not contradict them—that they lulled me into the dream that now everything was well again, and that at last, the day after to-morrow, we should be together. As you know, I am apt to believe what is most pleasant, and reckon that Jenny exaggerates; but I pray God very earnestly that it prove so, and that we may at last meet the day after to-morrow. Jenny says that, even after the relapse, the doctors were in favour of the journey! If I only knew beforehand how you will stand the travelling. If it is too much for you, be sure not to overdo it, but take a rest at Cöslin, and do not go on to Stettin till the afternoon, and then sleep there. . . . In thirty hours more I hope to see you at Stettin. May God give His blessing to the undertaking. Much love to the children. I send nobody to meet you, since you have expressly forbidden it.

Your most faithful

V. B.

CARLSBAD, Tuesday.
(Postmark, BITTERFELD STATION, *June* 28, '65.)

FRAU VON BISMARCK-SCHÖNHAUSEN,
Frankfort a/M, Englisher Hof.

MY HEART,—I arrived safely yesterday, but cannot say it is very pleasant here so far. There is a fine view from the Helenenhof, and in warm, fine weather there are other advantages, such as gardens, quiet, &c. But it is cold, rainy, and windy; the whole situation highly conducive to blue-devils and melancholy. I hope milder skies shine on you, and that you have a comfortable sofa. All that is comfortable in my quarters is the bed, a consolation, but a further difficulty in the way of getting up! You will have received my telegram about the safe arrival of the children the day before yesterday. Since then I know nothing. I drove alone with Abeken over the cold mountains. The King is well; he gave a grand dinner yesterday. Save for this, I have not been out of the house, the weather is too bad. I have therefore no news, but that I long greatly for the Wilhelmstrasse, you, and the children. One becomes a regular domestic animal in old age. Kiss Marie for me, and do not experiment too much with Struck and your health. God keep you.

Your most faithful

v. B.

CARLSBAD, *July* 1, '65.

MY DEAR HEART,—It delights me to learn from your two letters that it is well with our scattered flock everywhere. Give yourself no anxiety about your financial

excesses; what must be, must be, and whether you spend more or fewer of these petty gulden can have no result of moment to the future heir of each of our children. Practise no Pomeranian hospitality in Homburg; but, as to what you want, do not fuss about farthings, as you dear women are apt to do. Your table seems to me inexpensive, and your meals will be more agreeable at home than at the *table d'hôte*, where at times you might fare as between Steiglitz and the Turk.* We are having wretched weather; especially when I have time to go out, it rains in torrents, and when the sun shines I am sure to be driven with work. Keudell has not come yet; he must have had frightful arrears. Our abode might have its charms in fine weather. My outlook extends over the town, along the Tepl to the Erz Mountains, north-west, and thus into the sunset, should there be one, but mostly to a grey cloud bank; and to climb one hundred and eighty feet of steep and stony path down to the "Ship" and up again several times a day is not exactly an amusement. For the rest, it is quiet, visits made difficult by the remoteness, a cow-stable under my floor, fowls in the yard eating out of the bowl set for a chained lame dog, and in the evenings the lowing of the kine under me, with distant baying of dogs, "the watch-dog's honest bark," as in the country. . . . All happiness to you and Marie. God guard you both and Reinfeld. The courier takes this to Leipzig.

Your faithful

v. B.

CARLSBAD, *July* 7, '65.

At last, my heart, it is warm here, seventy-two in the shade, one hundred and four in the sun. . . . The enclosed will show you at last that you have an uncommonly good-

* Between whom she had fainted on one occasion at a dinner in Petersburg.

looking husband, beside whom even *le beau Guiche*, now Grammont, appears to no advantage, though I think him most imposing! But you will not believe it, and therefore I close, in a rage! A thousand good wishes to Marie and all friends. The Mühlers are here, on the way to Berchtesgaden.

Your faithful

v. B.

CARLSBAD, *July* 17, '65.

MY HEART,—I am very sorry you have been worried by silly rumours of my illness. The folks are always short of news, and, as they cannot keep silence, they give out gabble. I am as well as is possible with the heat and work. Keudell in white, Abeken and Zietel in light grey and white, make peculiar effects in the glowing sunlight! The Mühlers go to-day by Eger to Berchtesgaden, off into the night! She revived completely here, indeed, and her tyrannical thirst for pleasure upset my habits of life. Yesterday at Princess Lippe's, coffee for forty people, jugglers, dance in the Kaiser Park behind the Freundschaftsaal on the Tepl. The King stayed from five o'clock till nine. I seceded from the table of Princes and Excellencies, and joined the young folk, Polish, Wallachian, and Hessian girls. But as a watering-place for folks in search of pleasure, Carlsbad is the most wretched I know. After receiving this do not write here again, but to Salzburg, where I hope to be on the 23rd, or to Gastein for the 24th. Heartfelt love.

Your faithful

v. B.

GASTEIN, *August* 1, '65.

MY EIGHTEEN-YEARS-BELOVED HEART,*—Thirteen years ago to-day † you were in a critical condition, and we have many a deliverance since to thank God for, and may draw from His grace in the past confidence for the present and the future. May He restore you to perfect health and preserve you to the children! It is well with me, and you may dismiss all anxiety. The beer was so good at Ratisbon and Salzburg that I gave up banting, but here I am beginning again. I take seven baths, and a fortnight from to-day we shall probably, if God wills, move on, and stay one day in Salzburg, whither the Emperor is likely to come. We shall then, perhaps, get some more light on the political future, and therewith on my own further prospects. If anything comes of Biarritz, and you go to Homburg, your servant may as well stay behind, since Engel goes with you, but you cannot possibly do without a maid and new dresses; for since you have the misfortune to be my wife, the newspapers will surely take note on occasion of you and your attire. It is the misery of this position that the freedom of private life ceases, and therefore it is I warn you that in Homburg you must practise no economies which might be out of that measure which the public mercilessly defines for you, as the Prussian Prime Minister's wife, not according to your taste or means, but by your rank. We are unfortunately *forced* to regard a thousand thalers less than criticism on externals, and the part of a modest country housewife is no longer permitted you, at least not at watering-places! . . .

Your most faithful

V. B.

* They had been married eighteen years.

† The second son's birthday.

GASTEIN, *August* 14, '65.

For several days I have found no leisure to send you a word. Gr. Blome is back here, and we are hard at work, preserving the peace, and patching up the breaches in the structure. Not to seem *too* zealous, I gave a day yesterday to the chase; I think I told you how fruitless the first hunt was; this time I at least shot one fawn, but did not even see more in the three hours that I surrendered myself, motionless, to the experiments of many varieties of insects, and the lively murmur of the waterfall below me made me understand the depth of feeling which extorted from somebody before me the wish, "Rivulet, stop thy murmuring." In my bedroom even this wish is justified day and night. One breathes more freely when one reaches a place where the brutal noise of the waterfall is not heard. But, after all, it was a very pretty shot, right across the ravine; dead on the spot, the fawn fell head foremost into the stream, some steeples' lengths under me. My health is good, and I feel much stronger; whether from bathing or not it is hard to say; the doctors, at least, want to keep cutting me down in the number, time, and warmth of my baths. What shall I give our daughter for her birthday? I hope you are attending to this. I will write her a letter. . . . If you stay at Homburg long enough, I hope to make an expedition to you, and to enjoy the comfort of home, for which the Mühlers here do not entirely compensate. God guard you and ours. Best love to our little girl, who is beginning to be terribly old. Farewell.

Your most faithful

v. B.

ISCHL, *August* 21, '65.

MY BELOVED HEART,—I have torn a leaf from my despatch in order to send you at least a word of greeting with the steel pen of the inn. It was almost at this same season eighteen years ago that we were here; and as I drove to-day to St. Gilgen and thence along the Wolfgang Lake, my thoughts wandered terribly from the political conversations I was holding with my lord and travelling companion. I showed him the house on the Schaafberg, and told him about our expedition. There is a storm to-day, just as there was that time on the Wolfgang. If we had been told then, that in 1865 I should be spending our daughter's birthday here, and that you would be with her at Homburg, we should have thought it highly improbable. The Queen Dowager is here again, too; we are to take tea with her this evening, dining first with the beautiful young Empress. Yesterday we dined with the Dowager Empress (widow of Francis I.); in the evening went to the theatre. The road here was delightful; to-morrow we are to travel over it again, and the day after we shall be at Munich. I am longing for a little rest; this court life tells upon me more than official work. In two hours I have left twelve cards on people, in lightning, rain, and sunshine. I will drink Marie's health, and must now dress that I may be able to do so with due ceremony. I hope to come to you on Thursday, but shall telegraph to you more exactly, so that you may not expect me in vain. Kiss the child, who was unknown to us here eighteen years ago, and thank God with me for all the good He has bestowed on us since then, enabling me to fix my inward gaze on the home-hearth in the desert of political life, as the wanderer abroad on a stormy night gazes at the light

of approaching shelter. God grant it may be so till the final return!

Your most faithful

v. B.

[*Postscript.*—Addressed to Herbert von Bismarck.]

Keep this letter carefully for me, my boy. A thousand loving greetings from your

Old Mamma.

Baden, *September* 1, '65.

My beloved Heart,—I reached here the day before yesterday morning, slept till half-past twelve; then much work, dinner with the King, a long address, in the evening a quartette at Flemming's with Joachim, who really plays marvellously well. Yesterday on the racecourse many acquaintances whom I could not readily name.

September begins with rain; two-thirds of the year gone since we have become accustomed to write 65. Highnesses abound here. At four Marussa * wishes to see me; she is said to be very handsome now. Herewith two Lucca pictures. We both look stout, and like very good children. The King means to leave here on the 5th; he is undecided as yet whether by way of Coburg or Coblentz, on account of Queen Victoria, whom he wants to meet. In any case, I hope to pass through Frankfort on the 5th or 6th; whether I can be in Homburg, and how long, will have to be settled later—not longer than one day anyhow, as I must be in Berlin with the King.

The rain is very steady, and looks as if it would continue. Loving greetings to Marie and both boys.

Your most faithful

v. B.

* Princess of Baden.

BADEN, *September* 3, '65.

I send you enclosed, that you may see what sort of a husband you have! To-morrow morning, at six, we start for Coburg, to visit the Queen of England. I have to go with the King, and so my trip to Spa falls through! But it can't be helped! Oh! this dog's life! Good night.

Your most faithful

V. B.

SICHROW, *July* 1, '66.

MY BELOVED HEART,—We started to-day from Reichenberg, have just reached here, and are still uncertain whether we stay the night here or in Turnau. The whole journey was dangerous, and I am glad I am not responsible for it. The Austrians might have captured the King and all the rest of us yesterday, if they had sent out cavalry from Leitmeritz. Poor Carl, the coachman, has just had a terrible fall, with the red mare that ran away with him. They thought he was dead at first. He lies in the Sichrow hospital in the next village. Kurt is to come for him. We meet prisoners everywhere; there appear to be already more than 15,000, according to the reports received here. Jitschin was taken by us yesterday with the bayonet (the Frankfort division), General Tümpling severely wounded in the thigh, not fatally. The heat is frightful, the transport of supplies difficult. Our troops suffer from fatigue and hunger. In the country, so far, there are few traces of the war, save the down-trodden fields of grain. The people are not afraid of the soldiers; they stand with their wives and children in Sunday dress before their doors and stare in wonder. At Trautenau the inhabitants murdered twenty

unarmed musicians of ours, who had fallen behind when their regiment marched through. The guilty persons are at Glogau before a court-martial. At Münchengrätz the proprietor of a distillery enticed twenty-six of our soldiers into a cellar of spirits, made them drunk, and set it on fire. The distillery belonged to a convent. Apart from these things, we hear less news here than in Berlin. This castle, very imposing, belongs to the Prince de Rohan, whom I used to meet every year at Gastein.

Farewell. Fond love to the children and our guests. God guard you all.

Your most faithful

v. B.

JITSCHIN (not GITSCHIN), *July* 2, '66.

We have just arrived here from Sichrow; the battlefield on the way was strewn with corpses, horses, and arms. Our victories are far greater than we thought; it seems that we already have more than 15,000 prisoners, and the Austrian loss in killed and wounded is reported as still greater, about 20,000. Two of their corps are destroyed, several regiments annihilated to the last man. I have so far seen many more Austrian prisoners than Prussian soldiers. Send me cigars constantly by the couriers, as many as a thousand each time if you can, price twenty reichsthaler, for the hospitals. All the wounded ask me for them. Also either by collections or from our own purse subscribe for some dozens of copies of the *Kreuzzeitung* for the hospitals—for example, that at Reichenberg, and inquire at the War Office for the addresses of other hospitals. What is Clermont-Tonnere doing? Isn't he coming? I have no letters yet.

Send me a revolver of large calibre, a saddle-pistol. Carl, the coachman, is better; he will probably suffer no permanent injury, but will be unfit for service for some time.

Carl B.* deserves much praise, he is the active principle of our travelling comfort.

Best love. Send me a French novel to read, but only one at a time. God protect you.

Your most faithful

v. B.

Your letter with the Homburg enclosure just received; a thousand thanks. I can feel the loneliness of your journey with you! Here, in the bustle, one does not realise the situation, or at most only at night in bed.

HOHENMAUTH, Monday, *July* 9, '66.

Do you remember, sweetheart, how we passed through here nineteen years ago, on the way from Prague to Vienna? No mirror showed the future then, nor in 1852, when I went over this railway with the good Lynar. How strangely romantic are God's ways! We are doing well, in spite of Napoleon; if we are not extravagant in our claims and do not imagine we have conquered the world, we shall achieve a peace that will be worth our trouble. But we are as easily intoxicated as disheartened, and it is my thankless part to pour water into the foaming wine, and to insist that we do not live alone in Europe, but with three other Powers which hate and envy us. The Austrians still hold firm in Moravia, and we are bold enough to announce our headquarters for to-morrow at the point where they are now. Prisoners still keep coming in, and cannon, one hundred and eighty from the 3rd to to-day. If they bring up their southern army, we shall, with God's gracious help, defeat it too; confidence is universal. Our people are beyond praise, every man in deadly earnest, calm, obedient, orderly, in spite of empty stomach, soaked clothes, wet camp, little sleep, shoe-soles dropping off; they are

* Bismarck-Bohlen.

kindly to all; no sacking or burning, they pay what they can, and eat mouldy bread. There must surely be a solid basis of fear of God in our lower classes, or all this could not be. News of our friends is hard to get; we lie miles apart from one another, none knowing where the other is, and nobody to send—that is, men might be had, but not horses. For four days I have had search made for Philip,* who was slightly wounded by a lance-thrust in the head, as Gerhard† wrote me, but I can't find out where he is, and we have now come thirty-seven miles farther. The King exposed himself greatly on the 3rd, and it was well I was present, for all the warnings of others had no effect, and no one would have dared to talk so sharply to him as I allowed myself to do on the last occasion, which gave support to my words, for a knot of ten cuirassiers and fifteen horses of the Sixth Cuirassier Regiment rushed confusedly by us, covered with blood, and the shells whizzed around most disagreeably close to the King. He cannot yet forgive me for having denied him the pleasure of being hit. "At the spot where I was forced to run away by order of the supreme authority," were his words only yesterday, pointing his finger angrily at me. But I like him better thus than if he were excessively cautious. He was full of enthusiasm over his troops, and justly so, and so rapt that he seemed to take no notice of the din and fighting close to him, calm and composed as on the Kreuzberg, and constantly meeting battalions that he insisted on thanking with "Good-evening, grenadiers," till we were actually brought under fire again by this trifling. But he has had to hear so much of this that he will not repeat it, and you may feel quite easy; indeed, I hardly believe there will be another real battle.

When you have *no* word whatever of anybody, you may assume with confidence that he is alive and well; for if acquaintances are wounded, it is always known at latest in twenty-four hours. We have not come across Herwarth

* Von Bismarck, his eldest nephew.

† Von Thadden, commanding a squadron in the First Dragoon Guards.

and Steinmetz at all, nor has the King. Schreck, too, I have not seen, but I know they are well. Gerhard leads his squadron quietly, with his arm in a sling. Farewell—I must to business.

Your most faithful

v. B.

ZWITTAU, MORAVIA, *July* 11, '66.

DEAR HEART,—I have no inkstand, all being in use; but for the rest I am well, after a good sleep on a camp bed with an air mattress; I was roused at eight by a letter from you. I went to bed at eleven. At Königgrätz I rode the big chestnut thirteen hours without feeding him. He bore it very well, did not shy at shots nor at corpses, cropped standing grain and plum-leaves with zest at the most trying moments, and went gaily to the last, when I was more tired than the horse. My first bivouac for the night was on the pavement at Horic, with a carriage-cushion, no straw. The whole town was full of wounded; the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg found me and shared his room with me, Reuss, and two adjutants, and the rain made this shelter very acceptable. I have told you already about the King and the shells. All the generals had a superstition that they, as soldiers, must not speak to the King of danger, and always sent me off to him, though I am a major, too. They did not venture to speak to his reckless Majesty in the serious tone which was finally effectual. Now at last he is grateful to me, and his sharp words, "How you drove me off the first time," &c., are an acknowledgment that I was right. Nobody knew the region, the King had no guide, but rode right on at random, till I interposed to show the way. . . . Farewell, my heart. I must go to the King.

Your most faithful

v. B.

BRÜNN, *July* 16, '66.

MY BELOVED HEART,—After a rest of three days, I have resumed the Berlin life—up till two every night, then to bed till ten. I hoped to have got out of this unhealthy habit to some extent while I was here. Many thanks for your undated letter. What was there in mine that gave you so much pleasure? I have forgotten. Yesterday I drove with Roon to a lovely spot, all peace and quiet, woods, rocks, birds, and sunset. The heat is very oppressive to-day. The Crown Prince had a slight skirmish yesterday, in which he nevertheless captured sixteen guns. The Austrians seem to be moving towards Hungary. I think, however, that we shall soon have, if not peace, at least an armistice.

The 18th.

I have had a little rheumatism, but it is over now. It really came from nervous exhaustion. I was obliged to go to bed on Sunday at nine o'clock, to make up for the fifty hours' deficit of sleep I have had during the last fortnight. Just as I was going to sleep, Lefebvre returned from Vienna, and we negotiated till three o'clock, and again early the next morning. It went to my left leg! An elastic stocking gave me a little relief, and now it's better. We are going to-day to Nikolsburg, the castle of Countess Rensdorf, *née* Dietrichstein.

I wonder why the Chambers are not summoned?

Ask Eulenburg, and tell him it is most imperative that Parliament should take the war business in hand before conditions of peace are seriously discussed. I will come to the Chamber, if I can get away from the negotiations here. But, if I can't, they must open without me. Farewell, my heart, I am quite cheerful again, and, with God's

help, I shall remain so. Greetings to the children and to the ladies.

Your most faithful

v. B.

PRAGUE, *August* 3, 1866.

MY DEAR HEART,— . . . In a few days it will be nineteen years since we saw all this together. How much that is amazing has had to happen, in order to bring me again to this same place, without Bernets. . . . The speech from the throne has caused great discord in the Ministry. Lippe takes the lead in debate against me on the conservative side, and Hans Kleist has written me an excited letter. All these little folks have too little to do, see nothing beyond their own noses, and practise their skill in swimming on the tempestuous wave of oratory. We can manage the enemy—but our friends! They all wear blinkers, and see but one spot in the world.

Farewell, my dear. Here are people and papers. Hearty love.

Your most faithful

v. B.

BERLIN, Tuesday Evening.
(Postmark, *December* 7, 1869.)

TO THE COUNTESS VON BISMARCK-SCHÖNHAUSEN,
Bonn, at the Star.

MY DEAR HEART,—I am glad to hear from Keudell that you are getting on fairly well; but I fear that the reaction will be severe when the strain on your strength is over. I can find little that is assuring in your reports of the poor

weak boy, though my reliance on God's help is still firm. How shamefully they must have neglected him! Greet my beloved youngster heartily, and keep him very quiet; at first he will be patient and weak, but if his strength, with God's help, begins to return, great caution will be needed to keep him from presuming on it.

I dined with Roon on Sunday, and yesterday was with him at Gütergotz, where he has built himself a very imposing château. I don't want to take you there, or you would have nothing to do with the Varzin house. He builds and plants on a huge scale, but he gets no rents. Yesterday I dined at Malle's, to-day at Roon's again. Have no anxiety on my account, I am very prudent. I have slept well; the first night like the dead, ten hours, and then woke with the impression that I had just lain down. May you have many a night like it; I am much afraid you spend yourself in anxiety and watching. I have seen the King, but have not been in attendance. If I do not go to Bonn, a question I shall not decide till after Marie comes, I do not really know where I shall go, I cannot live incognito here; everybody has left Varzin, and I don't care to go abroad. Malle wished to go with me to Kröchlendorf. I might get some shooting, but till I have reassuring news from Bonn, I do not like to accept any invitation. Love to the dear children, comfort H., keep him quiet and patient, and spare yourself. No telegram to-day?

Your

v. B.

BERLIN, *December* 13, 1869.

MY DARLING,—God be thanked that your letters are comforting. The disease still rises and falls perhaps, but on the whole it keeps on the ebb, and through your accounts of the situation there breaks now and then a

consoling spark of humour, which shows that a spirit of joyful hope is uppermost in your heart. Poor Thile, alas! has suffered what threatened us, and worse; he had but one child, the son who made the stand with the Uhlans at Perleberg, and he has just received a telegram announcing his death from apoplexy. He had suffered from epilepsy before, but was thought to be cured.

In spite of the hopeful news of Herbert I cannot but fear that he will not be fit to travel at Christmas. Will it suit you if we keep the feast together at Bonn, or is the poor boy still so weak that it would be inadvisable? Write me just what you think without any mistaken consideration for me. The journey would not hurt me; there must be quiet lodgings to be found there, in which Herbert would not be disturbed. I cherish the idea of transplanting both the boys here, as soon as the recovery, with God's help, is sufficiently advanced. Of course, they are in God's hand anywhere, but after this time of anxiety you will always be uneasy if they are out of your sight, and you will regard Bonn in particular with less confidence than before, though you are indeed a brave and resigned woman, even more so in the actual presence of calamity than when your fancy gives fear free play. Write me your opinion. As soon as I am a little calmer, I will go for some days to Barby to shoot, taking Marie with me, perhaps on Saturday or Monday. If we then go to Bonn for the holidays, we might make our journey direct from there without returning to Berlin again; if you think it better that the invalid's quiet should remain unbroken, tell me so without reserve, and we must this time divide the Christmas-tree, half here, the other half at Schmitz's. If Herbert could leave his room by that time, there might be a place near Bonn—Rolandseck, Honnef, or the like—where we could spend a few days together quietly. Hearty greetings to both boys, over whose Christmas presents Marie is puzzling her head.

Your

v. B.

MAINZ, *August* 6, '70.

TO COUNT H. BISMARCK:

MY BELOVED BOY,—Hearty thanks for your letter of two days ago, received to-day; where this will find you, I know not. We go with the King to-morrow morning to the border; I should like to meet the dear blue colours there. The beginning, under God's blessing, is good; may it continue so to the end. Four hundred French prisoners came through here to-day from Weissenbourg and four hundred through Darmstadt. At Saarbrück the retreating marauders, who fired this unfortified town in their wantonness, were overtaken by Göben to-day, and Frossard's corps was utterly routed. Within a few days, with God's help, we shall say the same of the main army. I have good news of your mother, send her letters whenever you can. I hope she will soon go to Nauheim.

Hearty love to Bill, and join me and your mother in prayer that God will reunite us all in health, but, above all, that He will give us victory of His grace.

Faithfully, your father,

V. BISMARCK.

Should either of you be wounded, telegraph to me at the King's headquarters as quickly as you can. But do not let your mother know first.

VENDRESSE, *September* 3, 1870.

TO FRAU GRÄFIN VON BISMARCK:

MY DEAR HEART,—The day before yesterday I left my quarters here before dawn, but came back to-day, and have

meanwhile been through the great battle of Sedan on the 1st, in which we took some thirty thousand prisoners, and surrounded the remainder of the French army, which we had been chasing ever since Bar-le-Duc, in the fortress, where they had to surrender, with the Emperor, as prisoners of war. At five yesterday morning, after I had discussed the terms of capitulation with Moltke and the French generals till one o'clock, General Reille, whom I know, roused me to say that Napoleon wished to speak to me. Without washing or breakfasting I rode towards Sedan, found the Emperor in an open carriage with three adjutants, and three more at hand in the saddle, on the main road before Sedan. I dismounted, saluted him as politely as in the Tuileries, and asked his commands. He desired to see the King. I told him, as was true, that his Majesty's quarters were fourteen miles away, at the place where I am writing now. Upon his asking whither he should betake himself, I offered him, since I was unfamiliar with the region, my quarters at Donchéry, a village on the Maas close to Sedan; he accepted them, and drove, escorted by his six Frenchmen, by me, and by Carl, who meanwhile had ridden after me, through the lonely morning, towards our lines. He was distressed before reaching the place, because of the possible crowds, and asked me if he might not stop at a workman's house by the roadside. I had it examined by Carl, who reported that it was poor and dirty. "*N'importe*," said Napoleon, and I mounted a narrow, rickety staircase with him. In a room ten feet square, with a deal table and two rush-bottomed chairs, we sat for an hour, the others staying below. A mighty contrast to our last interview, in '67, at the Tuileries! Our conversation was difficult, as I tried to avoid touching on things painful to those whom God's mighty Hand had overthrown. I had sent Carl to fetch officers from the city, and request Moltke to come. We then sent out one of the officers to reconnoitre, and discovered, a couple of miles off, at Fresnois, a little château with a park. Thither I conducted him, with an escort of the Cuirassier

body-guards, which was meanwhile brought up, and there we concluded the capitulation with Wimpfen, the French general-in-chief. By its terms, from forty to sixty thousand French—I do not yet know the number exactly—have become our prisoners, with everything they have. The two preceding days cost France one hundred thousand men and an Emperor. He started early this morning, with all his court, horses, and carriages, for Wilhelmshöhe, near Cassel.

It is a great event in the history of nations, a triumph for which we will thank God the Lord in humility, and which decides the war, even if we have to prosecute it against France without her chief.

I must close. I have heard to-day with heartfelt joy from your letter and Marie's of Herbert's arrival. I met Bill yesterday, as I telegraphed to you, and embraced him from the saddle before the King's face, while he stood rigid. He is perfectly well and in high spirits. I saw Hans and Fritz Carl and both the Bülows with the Second Dragoon Guards, well and cheerful.

Farewell, my heart. Kiss the children.

Your

v. B.

GASTEIN, *August* 30, '71.

Happy the man to whom God has given a virtuous wife, who writes to him every day. I am delighted that you are well, and that you have come to be three, to whom I hope to add myself as fourth on the 7th or 8th. . . . You see I have enough mental leisure here to devote myself to the unaccustomed work of making plans; but all on condition that the excited Gauls do not worry my little friend Thiers to death, for then I should have to stay with his Majesty, and watch which way the hare runs. I do not think that

likely, but with such a stupid nation as the French anything is possible. Hearty love to both fat children.

Your most faithful

v. B.

GASTEIN, *September* 2, '71.

MY DARLING,—Your refreshing letter of the 31st, with the postmark Reichenhalle, September 1st, has come uncommonly quickly, after I had been four days without any, which, in view of your usual faithfulness in writing, made me uneasy. The fat rascals might also write a line once in a while; it need not be a letter, but just a sign of life. I am well, but work accumulates for me. The King of Greece came to-day, and leaves me no time to write; I must breakfast at his Majesty's with the exalted guest; hardly time for a bath. Do not count on me for Gmunden, but rather go there before I come, if, as I presume, you want to see the place and the little woman again. I am sorry Jagow stays away, on Bill's account. But at this season he no doubt finds other sociable vagabonds on the great routes of travel. Farewell, the fiddles have already struck up the Greek national hymn, a very merry march.

Your

v. B.

VARZIN, Trinity, *May* 26, '72.

It is dreary now you are gone, and I worry so that I don't know whether I can stand it for four weeks. Perhaps I shall drive to Reinfeld to-morrow with Westphal, but the depressing thing is to come back to the empty house. I was at church with Bucher, then we strolled for two hours in the park, dined with Westphal and Wisting-

hausen, and I have just inspected sheltered places for young trees for three hours. Weather and forest are fine, but if unscrupulous doctors, by their pompous insistence on mineral baths, break up all family ties, the finest Varzin can do me no good. I feel as if every one were dead, and I alone left. I trust you arrived safely; did you forward the letter to his Majesty? Love to my darling urchin, and send one of the youngsters here speedily.

Your

v. B.

(Telegram.)

Varzin, *May* 31, '72.

Princess Bismarck, *Soden Spa.*

I am as well as any childless grass-widower can be; fine weather.

Bismarck.

Friedrichsruh, Wednesday.
(Postmark, *October* 23, '78.)

Hearty thanks for your letter, my love. I have come here, after a long interval, for my first rest, found my enlarged bedroom more comfortable than anything for a long time, slept tolerably, spite of all excesses and strong coffee at ten o'clock. My first meeting with Ti.* to-day almost frightened me, as a reminder of the chains of office. The air fills the lungs splendidly, like good old wine in comparison with small Berlin beer. The forest foliage is rich, autumn tints prevailing as seen from above, many trees still in summer green from below. I walked an hour in the morning, then drove with Ti. through Bräken,

* Tiedemann.

Altenhau, Schönau, Silk, where the barns are full for the first time; lit on Stumm in the forest surveying with hussars, invited him to dinner, and have just let him go, nine o'clock. Ti. has a slight cold; Bill comes to-morrow morning, according to a telegram just received. Tiras and Flora are chasing each other like mad through the big rooms in the delight of meeting again, some of the furniture is not yet in place, and the curtains with their absurd trains cumber the ground. There has not been a bit of ice in the ice-cellar for weeks, because of defective plumbing. The stoves heat well; some of the chimneys still smoke. Horses well; the general impression satisfactory, especially the comforting sight of the wall we have built around us! A clear sky, fifty-nine degrees temperature; in short, I should be comfortable if you were with me and no visitors expected. Fond love to Marie and R.

Your most faithful

v. B.

VARZIN, Tuesday, *November* 18, '79.

The frosty weather suits me better than what went before, but my languor continues. "This is good for you" * is a regular journey afoot, with much standing and resting; but I have probably four weeks yet left for rest. How is the grandson? Was it wind? Hearty love to the "would be" mother and Rantzau. Adelheid is reading Italian, Herbert is writing close by, Sire † is cracking an enormous bone, and the tea-kettle is singing to all. God be with you and Marie.

Your most faithful

v. B.

* Words cut in the bark of a tree at Varzin.

† Tiras.

KISSINGEN, *July* 12, '81.

TO THE PRINCESS VON BISMARCK,
Kreuth, Upper Bavaria.

BELOVED HEART,—God be thanked for all the good tidings from you; may the grief of parting bear rich fruit of health. It is very empty here, in the house and outside in our walks and drives; even Tiras feels it, and whines inquiringly in the mornings to ask why Herbert comes and not you. We drive every evening, to get out in the open, resolutely and long, and then before eleven I go to bed, and yet after a good night's sleep struggle in vain to get up at nine. The ideal arrangement of the day is not yet attained. We have a few guests at dinner every day: yesterday Seydewitz, Mischke (adjutant to the Crown Prince), and Kracht; to-day Mühler (on business, unfortunately), and the good Frau Wallenberg, who not long ago dined at our house with Ohlendorf; she is always sociable and agreeable. I now bathe only every other day, and drink only two glasses, as favourable symptoms indicated that this was enough. After a while I will bathe oftener. Pains gradually diminishing, day by day, but they do not yet leave me entirely at peace. Herbert, for similar reasons, is to drink Rakoczy too, and to diet himself. I have persuaded Elise * to stay till Thursday; she is free from pain, but walks so stiff and lame that she would bring disgrace on your *ménage*. To-day seventy-nine degrees in the shade. . . . God bless you. Hearty love to Bill and the ladies.

Your

V. B.

* Lady's maid.

KISSINGEN, *July* 28, '81.

MY BELOVED HEART,—I received your telegram to-day with much joy, and join in thanks to God for all the grace that has been shown us in these thirty-four years. The very fact that His mercy has preserved us and all our family till now, and, as I firmly trust, will preserve us still, is a special and unusual favour, and how wonderfully has His guardian hand repeatedly worked for each of us five. I have had much anxiety, toil, and trouble, but in the retrospect of a third of a century my heart overflows in humble gratitude, with the confession that it has been well with me, beyond all desert and hope. May God's grace continue with us. In 1847 it was warmer than now; early this morning it was only fifty-two degrees; is now fifty-seven. Frau Wallenberg and Schlözer were with us for lunch, and we ate a hare from Barby; then I drove with Herbert to the bridge over the railway, and we walked back to Arnshausen, enjoying the view over the blue Rhön. I continue to improve under the treatment, though I have days of pain now and then; without them we shall not get the better of the mischief, and none of them is as bad as formerly. To-day I have been almost wholly free, and I sleep and eat excellently well. I go to bed earlier every night (at 10.30), and to-day I drank Rakoczy at nine o'clock. I take great delight in all good news from you, and it will be still nicer when we are once together again in robust health. Much love to Aunty and Madame Lully.*

From your most faithful

V. B.

* Frau von Stülpnagel.

Rogation Day, '84. FRIEDRICHSRUH.
(Postmark, *May* 18, 1884.)

TO THE PRINCESS VON BISMARCK, *Berlin, W.*

May you have slept, my heart, as well as I have here. It was seventy-two degrees when I awoke, now it is eighty-four degrees in the shade; but I wish you better ink when you write; this runs out at the first touch, and is all gone after three words. I therefore take a pencil. It is very fine here, although the alders are three days behind those at Berlin, and the oaks six. The hawthorns are just as at Berlin, and the oaks at Silk too. No nightingales, but countless grasshoppers, starlings, and the like, especially the cuckoo, which I had not yet heard in Berlin. I asked him, how much longer? The flatterer answered, twelve, but the last two were faint. The mill-race is a veritable cataract, very beautiful to see. The natural swamp there used to be of mould and water mixed, has been pushed some hundred yards upward, by skill and money, and the clear water is much enlarged. The mill grinds, but it leaks. I went in a carriage with Bill to Silk, where it is charming, but the rye is rather thin, and the barley wants more rain; the farm-hand complained of the "big drought." The fish-ponds have dwindled; the new plantings are again too deep in the ground! But the tilled field is splendid. May God restore you speedily. Love to Mary and Aunty.

Your

v. B.

FRIEDRICHSRUH, *December* 22, '86.

TO THE PRINCESS VON BISMARCK:

MY DEAR HEART,—The disturbance and the prolonged separation are, indeed, very distressing, but your chill much more so. Our festival can be postponed at pleasure, but must not override your health. We may celebrate it in two or three days, or, as the French do, at New Year's Day, but do me the favour not to drive through the winter air until you are quite well again. What are all festivities or gifts to me, if you fall ill? Misery would then take the place of joy, and no candle-lighting could avail! I earnestly beg you *not* to drive to-morrow, and the next day (24th) we certainly will not celebrate this time. Don't be obstinate; you will make me ill if you are, and apart from that will get snowed up. It is snowing here. All else is well, and I in particular, but I shall be ill with anxiety about you if I am not sure that you will stay quietly in your warm room. Please telegraph me at once that you will do so, or I shall have no peace. Fond love to all the children.

Your most faithful

V. B.

VARZIN, *July* 15, '87.

MY DEAR HEART,—Many thanks for your letter of this morning. I have been out in the oppressive heat all day; had an early walk over the Park and the Richtberg, then a drive with Rantzau to Misdow; saw Laura, still in bed after her confinement; did not dine till half-past seven with Adelheid, and now, just going to bed, I write you this loving word: May God grant us a rich blessing in health

as a recompense for our painful separation. We shall hope for compensation in the winter, and at least we shall not have to say of every indisposition: this comes from your wilfulness in the summer! In assured prospect of a happy reunion,

Your most faithful, but, at the moment, weary,

v. B.

It is raining hard. The trees have suffered in their foliage from cockchafers and lack of warmth. Rain has been plentiful. The fields look well; the summer fruit is better than at Schönau. Much love to H. and Marie.

(TELEGRAM.)

VARZIN, *May* 26, '88.

I can't bear it here longer without horses or wife. We return to-morrow.

V. BISMARCK.

FRIEDRICHSRUH, *July* 16, 1888.

TO THE PRINCESS VON BISMARCK,
Homburg-on-the-Height.

MY DEAR HEART,—I salute your happy arrival at Homburg with a few lines in my own hand, that you may have sure proof that I am well. Last night, as often as I turned over, I kept thinking how we are flung around the world: you rolling through the night on the railway in Thuringia, Herbert on the lake between Arcona and Bornholm, Marie in Berlin, Bill in Hanau, we here in the forest. Why can we not be together? To many,

travel is the highest enjoyment, to us a grief. Every day till now we two have dined alone, not even Lange with us. I do not want to see strangers, much as I miss my own when they are not with me. . . . The forest is as fine as it can be; the crops poor, except potatoes and oats, the hay soaked, wherever it does not still stand thick and flowery in the meadows awaiting the scythe. There is no lack of summer guests, spite of the cold, in all the small houses. They make the forest unsafe! I spend the whole day out of doors, walking, riding, driving, and have at least six hours of open air every day for one in Berlin. Nor do I so quickly get tired here on horseback or on foot. I do no work, on principle, when in the house. I read novels, reclining by the fire. If this does no good——

God be with you and strengthen you, so that you may come back robust and in good spirits. Hearty love to Aunty.

Your

v. B.

FRIEDRICHSRUH, *August* 22, '89.

TO THE PRINCESS VON BISMARCK,
Homburg-on-the-Height.

MY DEAR HEART,—Many thanks for your letter, which assures me you are well housed. Our separation is a misfortune which we will not make harder for each other by complaints. I must comfort myself here in company with Rottenburg, who is just as lonely, and Marie will soon have to part with her Cuno, too. Yesterday we celebrated her birthday and Christian's with many bouquets and with the foaming Moselle, which she likes so much. I brought her the only Niel rose I could find, and a huge nosegay, which I gathered behind the castle, of the

splendidly coloured Ohe heath. When I went to bed, after ten, Christian, not yet tired, was still playing with leaden soldiers, a helmet on his head, as their commander. But I have had to leave poor Tiras in the veterinary school. He could not be transported, and there is little succour here for sick dogs—the veterinary surgeons are only skilful with horses and cattle. I am somewhat anxious for the intrusive old black calf's head, with his good-humoured awkwardness. Cyrus hardly knew me; he has not grown much. The forest is charming with its oaks; the beeches are in places eaten bare by caterpillars, not around the house, but farther in the forest, and are generally poor in foliage. At Schönau I saw good lupines, huge seradella, and potatoes ninety hundredweight to the acre, twice as much as last year; the rye harvest is also good, but oats, barley, and clover have turned out very poorly. There has been nothing else to interest me here; I am just out of the bath, and am now going to Rott's lecture; on the way I want to stop at the writing-table to send you a word of love, wish you good weather, and report that all goes well even to the lame puppy. Please give much love to Merlchen,* and sincere remembrance to all.

Your

v. B.

* Frau Marie Meister.

THE END

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